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Mary and Sam, a cool, yet not very smart couple, head to the home of their friends Felicia and Bob, something for something to do on a beautiful Saturday morning. While scanning the magazines, Bob suddenly remembers hearing about an alien sighting that supposedly crashed at nearby Roswell Lake, and an offer of \$100,000 for anyone who can locate it. Always up for an adventure, Bob gathers his troops and then journey begins.

Faster than you can say "GOLDFISH," Bob and his gang get lost as they head to the "crash site." Along the way, they encounter a variety of strange people, places and things, including a saw-tooth, Organic Trail, Tasty Mates and a weird, pulsating light. Whatever the result, however, or something, is way, way not there.

"A SMALL GEM"

— Toronto Globe and Mail

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- Audio Commentary Featuring Director Peter Jackson
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Director Denis Tinsell brings two amazing storylines in this visually arresting film. First, a band of five teens escapes from a drug rehabilitation center to seek in an questionable gesture of salvation from the psychopathic, homicidal Sato, Jr. (Wesley Lambert). Later at the park, Jack (Denny Layden), lured by hallucinations, transports the gang to the monster's isolated house where the second plot is unfolding.

How Ben Crane (Elroy Michael), Sato, Jr.'s daughter, whom he and his equally smart wife (Christie Sankoff) have isolated through hard drug addiction and psychic brainwashing. Crane's only salvation appears to be the guidance of her paternal grandfather, Howard Sato, Sr. (The Amazing Kresling). But hope is quickly extinguished when it is revealed that Sato, Sr.'s continuing visitations are from beyond the grave.

It is through Crane's visions of her grandfather that the focus of her parent's domestic problems, substance, murder, and worse.

SPECIAL FEATURES

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- Screen Actors Guild Film Award Nominee's Best Short Film, 2002 (2002)
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George Romero looks back on *Day of the Dead*, his major credits open on the eve of another Day of the Undead... and much more. Plus: *The Shivers* on *Day of the Dead* and reviews of Romero's *Dead End* films, *The Crazies* and *Night of the Living Dead* DVD releases!

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CLASSIC CUT

The golden age of William Gaines' EC comics.



July/August 2007, Issue #54

Note From Underground

I remember back when *The Blair Witch Project* first came out and became this huge international hit. I had to politely sit and listen to family and friends as they went on about how it couldn't possibly be a horror movie. How could it be? They argued, "horror movies are all about knives and blood and the Blair Witch has none of that!"

Undoubtedly, this is the kind of thing that usually occurs to most anyone the genre makes significant breakthroughs into the mainstream. According to the *Internet Movie Database*, *The Blair Witch Project* isn't a horror movie either, it was a "psychological thriller," as was *Psycho* before it and, unfortunately, *28 Days Later* after it, depending on how well that particular movie does in theaters. I've seen that people who have actually tried to argue that *The Blair Witch* isn't a horror movie either.

Really, these kinds of statements only have meaning in marketing departments, distasteful companies and morally insecure people looking to justify a taste for the occasional fright flick. The reason the general public doesn't want to "like" horror movies is because admitting that they like a horror movie is akin to admitting they dig porno, and a lot of people just don't see themselves making those kinds of admissions. So anytime a horror movie comes out onto major cash dollars, you'll be damned if anyone is calling it such, at least in mixed company.

All that doesn't mean a hell of a lot to us at Rue Morgue. For us, pretty much anything that tries to be scary or refers to scary things is a horror movie. Whether people agree with that definition or not is immaterial because anyone who knows fright films knows that the difference between *Scream* and *The Blair Witch Project* is only in what the filmmaker thought would scare people the most.

The reason I personally don't make a fuss about all this is because I've come to accept that the general nonscary public is not very educated about the film medium and, frankly, doesn't even know — or care — how to talk about film in general. (If this seems like a blanket statement, I suggest you listen to the very most people talk about movies, they're pretty content to either like a movie or not and leave it at that.) Movies, especially horror movies, aren't really about art to the average thingies, they're more about amusement, something to help pass the time, perhaps.

If only it ended there.

Unfortunately, many mainstream filmmakers have adopted a similar view. Even when they admit horror films tend they almost inevitably die, they continually misadmonished them by either confusing gross-out for suspense or assuming that a movie is immediately going to make for a horrifying experience (see Danny Boyle's *28 Days Later*). Maybe that's why new genre directors making horror into horror is generally a bad thing, unless the source material happens to be particularly good (as in Gore Verbinski's *The Ring*).

I've always felt that horror movies are like magic tricks, there's an artistry to it, a trick to it and with horror movies the trick can be traced back to ghost stories, urban legends and cautionary fables. It's the trick of making you dread the idea of seeing something while keeping you so engrossed that it's impossible for you to turn away. It's about harnessing the ability to make people want to see what they don't want to see. Whether it's a knife-wielding maniac or a witch running through the woods doesn't make the slightest difference, because any director who understands horror movies knows that virtually anything is potentially frightening, it's all how you do it. David Lynch is worth hanging up here, mainly because his movies manage to evoke scenes that are disturbing and horrifying from very obscure narratives. And in case you didn't notice, Lynch never uses monsters (well, hardly ever, anyway).

In the end, horror movies will always be a facet, because the minute a horror movie does its job so well that it becomes a runaway hit, it ceases to be a horror movie. Sure, it's a word game at best and, like I said, doesn't really concern to much at Rue Morgue. We're just happy that — no matter what they call it — somebody is actually getting scared and getting a kick out of it.

BC

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Past & Present

QUESTIONS • COMMENTS • CRITICISM

ALL I CAN SAY IS WOW That cover looks AMAZING! It looks more beautiful and creepy than I could have ever imagined. You guys nailed it perfectly, as I knew you would. That just looks so damn scary! I'm truly honored to be on the cover of your magazine, not only because I'm a huge fan of it, but because *Raw Magazine* really writes about the genre in the way a devotee. Your journalism is always intelligent and insightful, and I'm just proud that I made a film you feel is worthy of being on the cover.

Ed Roth — Los Angeles, California

WANTED TO SAY THANKS for the quick service in completing my subscription and the delivery of my first issue. I had discovered your mag a couple of years back on a trip to the USA, and enjoyed it immensely. I think that the balance you have now in *AM* is spot on and I must admit I love the Classic Cuts section right at the end of the mag, great movie. Anyway guys keep up the good work and I look forward to a long association with *Raw Magazine*, the #1 mag for horror in entertainment.

Ron Tyler — Isle of Anguilla, North Wales

YOUR EDITORIAL HIT HOME with me. I've been writing horror fiction for years now and I've experienced quite a bit towards my style as many of the editors comment I've taken. People can't seem to separate "fictional" from real and wonder with "real" rape and murder. I would be shocked personally by my fellow students for objectifying women and having no compassion for human life. Clearly oppression on the part of slave-mastered people regarding the beauty of horror. The beauty being that the fascination with "fictional" murder and rape can be appreciated by those who are responsible enough to recognize it as fiction and not as a psychiatrist's mistake. I applaud your refusal to print about "real" reports and murders because, I being one who appreciates "fictional" horror would never consider actual rape or murder and label it as. I mean who in their right mind would? I will say this though without "real" murders to inspire fiction we would never have had *Rosemary's Baby*, *Exorcism*, *Salem of the Sands*, or *Q.T. Jones* go as far as to say any of the great horror movies (combine do indeed consider murder). So let us keep the torch bright for those who make horror movies or write horror fiction but let's put

murder out that real life horror may be in no place person.

Philip Overby — Pascagoula, Mississippi

I WANTED TO COMMENT on what that guy wrote in the latest issue about how Chris Alexander was wrong about *Darkness Falls* and *Four Last Chances* (May 1). I've been watching horror since I was old enough to sit up straight but I've never seen a horror movie with that much hype looking back since then. I did a bit on *Four Last Chances* but everyone I have talked to says the same thing that Chris said, not so much defending it as a great movie but not having it all to hell and back. It's the first thing I do when I get my *Raw Magazine* in the mail is look for Chris' stuff, because he's right on. Every time. And on top of that I laugh my ass off reading it because he's funny. You can tell he becomes the great Chris Alexander inside his face?

Melody Williams — Hattiesburg, Mississippi

I HAVE TO TELL YOU that your magazine is truly awesome. I especially love your reviews and *Clare-Mat* features. I always learn about some old, forgotten, treasure and have picked up several DVDs based on those reviews. All your writers are great, but one in particular is my favorite. I'm referring to Chris Alexander. Alexander is the funniest, funniest movie critic I've ever read. His review of *Darkness Falls* was so out of control, I felt different after reading it. I ended up writing *Darkness Falls* and didn't think it was as bad as he did, but that's why I like him. He seems to love horror and feels as strongly and passionately about it as I do. And he's funny as hell! Another thing I love about *Raw Magazine* is the *Audio/Drama* section. Again, I just love finding out about aspects of the genre that I've never heard of, including all those great horror bands out there! Thanks for giving the horror genre a good name!

Mark Diamante — Ottawa, Ontario

I WANTED TO LET YOU KNOW what a fantastic magazine you have on your hands. It is just simply the best looking and best reading horror mag I have ever seen, written by some very well read horror fans. My wife got me a sub for my birthday and I have it (as death). You should see me the look some with the William Batty interview and that's when I was hooked

Imagine digging me, and not digging it, Batty's religious beliefs as the source of his horror instead of the source of another magazine's ridicule. Batty is a wonderful world, but my husband who's given me several thought to horror has to realize it's many religious origins (Chris, Bill, many from the dead, spirits, demons etc.) Anyway thanks for a scathing, honest article. I plan on collecting every back issue that I can.

Steve Strick — Brunswick, Ontario

ALL IN ALL, you continue to publish the greatest genre magazine out there but when I came upon *Cinebabes*, I was a little more than shocked to read the review of *House of 1000 Corpses*. Honestly speaking, the reviewers of *Raw Magazine*, although sometimes moved by personal opinion, tell it like it is. Thus, I know many Rob Zombie fans, fans who feel he can do no wrong, and wish for him to succeed in all ways. His whole-life's career writing through the two hour run-time rock video workflow that a *MOVIE* means that Chris Alexander and Emma Anderson are two much fans. Don't get me wrong, I like Rob Zombie's music, and he has shown some talent behind the camera, but telling a good story it seems is not his strong point. As a horror fan, I found his movie to be derivative and, much to be told, rather boring. Not scary. Not shocking. Definitely not disturbing. It may have looked pretty bad, as they say, scary is only skin deep. When you scratch the surface on this one, you get crap we've all seen before 1000 times. My point is horror fans read your magazine and look for direction as to what to spend their money on. The review on *Corpses* made it sound much more interesting than the film really was, it was passing because Alexander and Anderson wanted it to be a lot better than it was. If anything, you should have printed a "be careful the snaf" sort of review, one for fans of Rob Zombie and one for fans of horror films.

Jay Mallory — Mississauga, Ontario

We encourage readers to send their comments via email or mail. Letters may be edited for length and clarity without. Please send to: info@rawmagazine.com or
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Horror Happenings

Gordon unleashes Hitchcockian horror



What do golf clubs, ratchet barbers, cedar blocks and refrigerators have in common? They're all murder weapons used in *Shutter* (the animation, Japan). Gordon's ultra-dark new crime thriller *King of the Ants*, which premiered Friday the 13th at the Seattle International Film Festival in June and will also showcase at Montreal's upcoming Festival des Films Festival (July 17 to August 18). The master of unconventional horror films redefines the boundaries of the genre once again with his adaptation of the best-selling 1993 British novel by Charles Hagson. After seven years of struggling to find financial backing for the screenplay, which Gordon calls "a horrifying and perverse story that breaks all the rules," the script was finally rescued by The Asylum - a relatively new production/distribution company

founded in 1997 specializing in stylish and daring genre films.

"The Asylum is pretty loose," Gordon told *Rue Magazine*. "I have to comment there because everyone killed the script down, even Screenco's company, who called it 'too uncomfortable to make'."

Gordon checks up the periphery of the story to the fact that the film's sympathies remain fastidiously on the murderer's side throughout its incredibly brutal killings.

"The film is about a guy who is hired to kill an innocent person, which he does, and somehow you still like the guy," admits Gordon. He says he was attracted to the piece because it sympathized with a cold-blooded killer without resorting to black comedy to do so.

"At the centre of the story is the main character who discovers who he is through the course of the film and what he's good at," he adds. "He comes to realize he's actually a pretty damn good exterminator."

King of the Ants is an unusual story about a house painter named Sean Crowley (Chris McKenna) who is hired by his construction company employees to kill an innocent accountant from City Hall for a promised \$12,000. Much to everyone's surprise, he actually does it - and does it well. But Mac-killered bosses, however - played by George (Chris) Wirth and Sean (Hansman) Baldwin - have no intention of paying him. Instead of killing him, they perversely try to turn Sean into a vegetable by feeding him on the head repeatedly with a golf club (!) so that he can't ever tell anyone. As the twisted new film unfolds, the "bad guys" realize that Crowley actually relishes his new "vacation" and won't be crushed like any ordinary ant

The film also stars Karl (Eight Legged Freaks) Weber and Ron (Office Space) Livingston.

Gordon assures that although unusual and surreal at times, *LOTE* is definitely a horror film with a Hitchcockian-style story with lots of suspense and creative ideas (What the director reveals that McKenna tells everyone in the film without using a single gun?).

"It's not supernatural," adds Gordon. "It's set very much in the real world but I think it's definitely a horror film because of the suspense and plot twists and horror. *King of the Ants* is the kind of film Hitchcock would be making today."

Bleeding on a modest budget of just under a million dollars, *King of the Ants* is the first in a series of so-called novels that Gordon will be adapting for the screen in the near future, including Jack Kerouac's *Under the Sign* and the 1991 horror novel *Where the Hell Did That*, written by T. Chris Martin. *King of the Ants* trailer, along with more information on the film is available online at www.theasylum.co

Jon Vachek



George doesn't leave his head in *King of the Ants*.

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Zombie series is e-book triumph for Brit novelist



"I've got a heavier life," explains David Moody the British writer behind a trilogy of apocalyptic zombie novels that are generating a large international fanbase. "I've got a large family – four girls – and I'm a bank manager."

When not setting scenarios in his day job he's busy crafting an end of the world tale in his *Autumn* book series, which details the struggle of survivors in a world where 99 percent of the population has been wiped out by a virulent disease that transforms corpses into, you guessed it, mindless killing machines.

"The thing that I like to do is put a bit of believability into it," says Moody. "What has never appealed to me about zombie movies is the pretentious flesh-eating, which usually doesn't have an explanation. It's usually just gone for gore's sake, so I tried to get rid of a bit of the gore element of it and put a bit more emotion into it. There's no psychobabble."

He's also quick to point out that he's very aware of the importance of creating charac-

ter most people can identify with. In the first book, *Autumn*, the main players are an engineer, a university student, and a computer technician. Craig Independence Day, he says, that too often end-of-the-world narratives revolve around unrealistic individuals. Raise your hand if you've ever known a fighter-jet-flying US President.

"Dealing with the man or woman on the street instead of stereotypical heroes, scientists, politicians and soldiers etc. gives the books a unique and something out of beauty and matter-of-factness, which has huge appeal," says Moody.

It's the same sort of appeal as in Danny Boyle's latest movie, *28 Days Later* (written by Alex Garland, *The Beach*) which features a London tube commuter and his companions fighting to escape a deadly and highly communicable disease that's wiped out most of England by turning the infected into violent human monsters.

The similarities aren't lost on Moody, who completed *Autumn* in the fall of 2001.

"I've had plenty of e-mails from people saying, 'Have you seen *28 Days Later*?' The *Winkles* walked your idea! I don't think that for a second," he says. "The two books are very similar, and I absolutely love that film."

The *Autumn* trilogy, however, is bigger in scope with more characters.

Moody recently released part two, *Autumn: The City*, which follows a second group of survivors, and is designed to take the reader "closer to understanding what happened to destroy the world on a single rainy morning." September morning." He

plans to release the final installment, *Autumn: Purification*, in September of 2004. In addition, he's also collaborating (in five installments called) *Autumn: Emissa*, "a collection of snapshots of lives" of characters that weave their way through the main stories.

The best part is that *Autumn* is its 120,000-words entirely available for free download at Moody's site, at www.davidmoody.co.uk. *Autumn: The City* can be had exclusively there as well for less than US \$5.

"I put myself in the shoes of the reader," says Moody, who's had his story downloaded over 30,000 times so far. "I'm completely against the traditional ways of going about it, of getting an agent, a publisher. I want to do it on my own. I've got enough faith in my writing that I can do that."

And just what the hell sparked this fan-frenzy with the living dead on such that he started promoting free zombie novels?

"It's the image of the bodiless," he notes. "That's the lasting memory from the first time I sat down to watch *Night of the Living Dead*. It's the scene outside the farmhouse – when you're looking at the farmhouse and the

body is walking towards it. There's just something about the bodies, being shells and congregating around the house. For no other reason than the fact that there are living people in there. It's something that's always freaked me out and it comes up time and time again in the *Autumn* books."

David Alexander



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Dreadlines ROADKILL

FROM THE
INFO HIGHWAY

www.dreadfile.com

This is no "horrorcore" website, say the creators of *Dreadfile*. "We don't put on邪淫淫淫 pages and scary sound combinations of night driving to dead people." Rather, these ghostwriters typically read haunted (and sometimes even the light's just right for creepy photo ops. Scaries do they set a ghost, but they sure can take a page.

www.sagepub.com

An extensive release to John Carpenter's *The Thing* including info on Ringuets-2001 held in London, Ontario every October - calls a thing screaming and then do the party thing.

www.shopmystery.com

Camping Week John Kays started this site which has since been declared the Official Sleepover Camp website by the Wilderness Foundation. Kays even traveled from Australia to LA to continue commentary to the Camp DVD. Now that's a sleeper!

www.hallween.com

Halloween that is pretty much most of the year, until Halloween comes around, that is. That's when all sorts of strange things start to happen to him and his cohorts in this indie comic book, available here for a mere \$8 issue.

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It is a book for all those who love to read.

Discovery of new stories from Stephen King

At the first launch of *The Complete Guide to the Works of Stephen King* by Rocky Wood, David Kewborne and Norma MacBarn, a 118-page book published on CD-ROM, it was revealed that ten previously unknown stories by best-selling writer Stephen King have been discovered. These stories were hidden in the archives of his alma mater, the University of Maine at Orono, where King has lodged many of his papers at the Special Collections Unit of the Raymond F. Taylor Library over the years. On June 2, 74 hours of manuscripts, papers, proofs and other material became available to researchers, although some hours have restricted access requiring written permission from the author.

"We were delighted and amazed to discover these new stories while researching our *Guide*," co-author, Rocky Wood said. Full details of each story have been included in the CD-ROM. "It is well known that there are over a dozen unpublished King short stories, screenplays and novels," continued Wood, who travelled from Australia to Maine late last year to read many of these works, which are only available at the Library. He spent several weeks combing every item in each box.

"I felt like an archaeologist discovering a hidden tomb when I came across the first unknown story," said Wood. A number of other

manuscripts were found and researched with the assistance of King's effort but were shown not to be his work. "It was really like being a private investigator-combing through the boxes then doing hours of research to ensure the credentials of each work."

Completed works are fiction, a 3600-word complete science fiction story and *They Rise*, a 118-page screenplay in an Allen scanner fiction style that appears to have been written about 1975. Screenplays are a selection of works including the longest story, entitled by King but given the name *The Huffman Story* by the *Guide*'s authors.

"There are 71 well developed pages in this story, which is surely reminiscent of the murders in *The Dead Zone* and all King's mythical towns, Castle Rock, Maine, Wood said. "King's trademark - characters the reader is immediately interested in - is apparent in this piece."

Another unfinished piece, *Conch's Dump* is a mystery story set in a Maine psychiatric hospital.

Stephen King is famous for his journals where he writes thoughts and stories, some containing up to ten different pieces of work. Four of the incomplete stories were found in King's handwriting in such a journal. "Strangely, that was the very last box I checked and there they were, four more gems," Wood commented. Using King's tales in the journal they have been dubbed *Marble*, *The Evaluation*, *Movie Show* and *Chap Combs*.

"It is amazing to observe how close and close King's writing is to his first handwritten draft," Wood said.

The two other partial stories were started with King's name, *Ocean* and *Joseph*. But only the *Dreadfile* *Love Me* is headed by Stephen and Joseph King. "I Hate Mondays" is headed, "by Stephen and Ocean King."

The Complete Guide to the Works of Stephen King is available online at www.barnard.com for US\$49.99. It is the result of three years' work by the three King experts and is expected to set a standard in the way King's recent work for many years to come. Full details about the *Guide* are available at the site.



2

THE 2nd ANNUAL

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GEORGE A. ROMERO RETROSPECTIVE

Back in 1981, **GEORGE ROMERO** released **DAY OF THE DEAD**, the third of his *Living Dead* movies and probably the pre-eminent American gore film of all time. Romero looks back on his major zombie opus on the eve of *Another Day* Entertainment's DVD release and talks about politics, Hollywood... and **ZOMBIES**.

THE DEAD WALK... AGAIN!

BY BOO GUDINO

Back in 1968, George Romero took over the world with *Night of the Living Dead*—a film that clearly transcended the genre while simultaneously cementing its creator's status as a horror director. *Days of the Dead* followed ten years later (gore! Woodens! it was nevertheless a film that even people who don't like horror movies can remember having seen), but 1985's *Day of the Dead* well, that one was pretty much reserved for the die-hard horror fans. Poorly received on initial release, critically overshadowed by its two predecessors and much too gruesome for a wide audience, *Day of the Dead* remains Romero's masterpiece of splatter filmmaking: his true magnum opus, tribute to a gore-out sensibility that can be whimsically traced to EC comics.

1985 was a different time. Don Johnson and Philip Michael Thomas were surfing the Florida beach in their *Top Gears*, and *The Thompson Twins* were in the Top 30. In theaters, Jason Voorhees was carving out *A New Beginning*, while *Wes Craven* un-

leashed *Freddy Krueger* in *A Nightmare on Elm Street* and Dan O'Bannon's *Dead Again!*—*Return of the Living Dead*—was a done deal. It was a different time, a time that Romero—who was always very cognizant of the spirit of the age—managed to capture in *Delicious*. With *Day of the Dead*, Romero concentrated on the dark subtext of the mid-1980s—the specter of nuclear holocaust, an aftermath of social death—signs, but what made the movie so unique was the incredible ingenuity of its special effects, courtesy of son Tom Savini, who was given a substantial budget with which to film his substantial creative muscle. In the end, the film's dark themes and political subtext exploded in a shower of unbridled gore, one that made the movie truly a child of its time: a time when a major genre film could get some serious financial backing and could even win a theatrical run.

Romero was thinking even then: the start end, in many ways, *Day of the Dead* presents ideas of *Night* and *Dawn* taken to logical extremes. *Night* pro-



"TO ME THE FILMS ARE MORE SATIRICAL THAN ANYTHING ELSE - I DON'T EVEN THINK OF THEM STRICTLY AS HORROR FILMS." - GEORGE ROMERO ON THE LIVING DEAD MOVIES



Year of the Zombie Anchor Bay releases Romero's splatter masterpiece just as the living dead are making it back to the big screen

posed that the dead came back to life, and Dawn proposed that civilizations had fallen to them, but in *Day*, the dead had completely taken over, outnumbering the living by a ratio of 400,000 to 1. The idea of a small fraction of people suspended in a small place was also pushed to its limits: this time there were more people - military people, scientists - and infinitely more possibilities for an eventual social breakdown. *Day of the Dead* even introduced the idea (chiefly through the characters of Dr. Lopez and Dale Gribble), that the living and the dead had somehow begun an uneasy relationship. Romero's splatter masterpiece may have found echoes in later films (notably Peter Jackson's *Dead Alive*), but it remains very much on its own turf - the culmination of

Night of the Living Dead finally crossed over into the crimson glare of H.G. Wells-styled gore on a \$3.5 million dollar budget.

Romero, of course, went on to create his name as one of the top in gross pictures never having to relinquish his crown as the King of Zombies, despite the fact that he never made another living dead film. Even so, he often spoke about making a fourth *Dead* film, and even put his name in the list when producers were looking for someone to direct the 6th version of the *Resident Evil* game which, ironically, was the first original contribution to American zombie-film since *Day of the Dead*. Now, with the living dead making a comeback in Danny Boyle's *28 Days Later*, Michael and Peter Spang's *Unleash*, *Resident Evil 2* in pre-production

and a remake of *Day of the Dead* showing in Toronto, it seems that Romero's day may have come at long last. Or has it?

Bar Mitzvah spoke to George Romero in May

Resident Evil 2 and the films remain one being filmed here in Toronto and it seems that the living dead are in vogue all over again. Is that making things easier for you and your plans for making the fourth Dead film?

No, it hasn't! [laughing] It's tough to get any deal together these days.

That's kind of funny. You have three zombie movies behind you and you'd think the renewed interest might make things easier



GEORGE A. ROMERO RETROSPECTIVE

for you. I did read somewhere that you had a script and a proposed budget of \$4 million dollars. Is that still the case?

Yeah I do have a script and it's out at a couple of places but it's hard to get a cooling, even for me. People have opinions of what they want it to be and I think they'd rather maybe spend more money on it and make it not more of an extravaganza, you know, a *Twinsmaster 3-type* thing. Very few people care particularly about the business that I'm trying to cling to so it's been hard. People want to design it the way they want to design it. You run into all kinds of obstacles—people want to call it *Hells of the Living Dead*—it's the typical Hollywood BS that goes on. And it's actually not \$4 million, it's more like \$12 to \$13 million, so that makes it tougher.

What can you tell us about the new script?
It's called *Dead Awakening* but it's kind of difficult to summarize. The conflicts have pretty much taken over and it's set in a city where people are trying to live as if nothing's wrong. [Laughs]

You were set to direct Resident Evil as some point. Why didn't that pan out?
They didn't like my script, that's what it came down to. It was a German company

and we were working with executives in LA and the guy who runs Constantin is the kind of guy who changes the index paper himself! We were working with executives who took us to a discussion and, gosh, I think we made about five drafts of it and it turned out that when the big man came to be wanted to go in a completely different direction and that was that. All of a sudden a new story.

It's incredible how that happens, just like that.

It happens so often. My partner and I had a two-year deal at New Line and they never made a picture with us you know. That was the same thing, they were buying us properties but *Shut Shop* at the time just didn't like any of them so they spent a lot of money and nothing went anywhere.

Have you read the script for the Dawn of the Dead remake?

No.

Is that interesting to you because it hasn't crossed by your desk?

No, it's just that I haven't come across it. But, you know, I'm not delighted that it's happening. On the other hand, I don't have any prejudice against it, I just thought a woman's a very good idea.

Are you going to see it when it comes out?
Probably I can't imagine that somehow I

won't get there.

The grand story in your Dead series is that human beings are tearing themselves apart both socially and literally under unbearable circumstances. Why have you returned to this story in particular each time?

Well, that's because, it's partly tradition. I'm trying to use the films as a platform to express my political views. To see the films are more surreal than anything else. I don't even think of them strictly as horror films, the second one I felt was just a goof [laughs].

Are your political views a result of upbringing or education?

From observation I think. I came up through the textures and had a lot of hope and that was dashed for a lot of us, you know. My upbringing was not in any way radical, my parents lived in New York, they were simple folks and that's where I grew up. So I wasn't following in my father's footsteps or anything like that.

Do you feel a renewed hope now in the new millennium or not?

I think it's worse to be honest with you. I think we're looking pretty far.

Are you talking about the human condition or the United States in particular?

A little bit of both. The films, I think,



*Experimentally in *Dawn*, Romero's zombie-apocalypse left little to the imagination*



"NOBODY WOULD PRESUME TO GO OUT AND MAKE A COMEDY BUT EVERYBODY OUT THERE THINKS THEY KNOW HOW TO MAKE A HORROR FILM." - GEORGE A. ROMERO

address both sides of that – the political allegory is much broader than the stories of the individual characters, not communicating and not seeing each other's point of view and all those basic, old monster-within-us kind of themes.

In *Day of the Dead* you have a male theme; the progressive active woman versus the repressive, fascist soldier. Philosophically, you have a second revision, the scientific urge to "tame" the living dead and somehow control their threat, versus the military impulse to destroy them. Did you write the story around the themes or did the themes around the story?

It's really so hard to say, especially going back that far, exactly what was going through my mind. I generally do a little bit of both. I go back and forth over scenes and move them around until I find the story that pleases me the broadest theme that I go after first, and I usually take that and weave the story around it.

The use of *Day of the Dead* is dramatically different than *Night of the Living Dead* – it seems more narrative and as characters seem to be more in keeping with the stuff you did for *Cronos*. What made you take the swing in that direction?

Well, I have this concern that the films were made in different decades and I was trying to, I guess, reflect the peculiarity of the times and that's just the way they went – it seemed those were the personalities of the films themselves. The first one was very serious and very narrative, the second one was lazier and sillier, you know, a cameo out (with) everybody dancing, and the third one, I just felt that we were in a darker place and that played perfectly into the sensation of the times and all of that. But I'm surprised you would compare it to *Cronos* because I don't see that particularly.

I guess the way I use it is that it seems very much in keeping with a kind of comic book feel, in the sense that the characters and the

violence are more exaggerated than the previous media. With the *Dead* movies and *Day of the Dead* in particular you get away with a lot, so to speak, they are way gayer than *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* or *Last House on the Left*, and yet, the violence is of a different sort, it's very festive and funny. When people watch your movies, a lot of the time the reaction is laughter at the gore sequences in particular. It's kind of an EC comic book kind of taste.

Well, I think that's really what I grew up on as I hope that is there. They do have a kind of celebratory attitude even towards the gore and a lot of guys like Sam and me, we go via those movies and that's our reaction, laughter. Definitely it's a flashback to those old days of EC.

Do you still like *Day of the Dead*?

It's become my favorite of the three, actually. So much goes in to making a film, you know, and a lot of it is execution and how much you're satisfied with your own work.

The *Wizard of Gore* reflects on his groundbreaking FX work for Romero's most gruesome film.

TOM SAVINI: A DAY WITH THE DEAD

BY NATHAN TYLER

Take my masterpiece of splatter," notes Tom Savini of his work on George A. Romero's 1985 zombie classic, *The Return of the Living Dead*. "The real *Day of the Dead* was it." Fans of Savini's special makeup effects would agree. Of all the legendary FX master's best, it's quite enthralling—Mexico, Friday the 13th and Crepusculo among them—none delivered the gore spectacle and visceral 'em dash the audience's thrills in such a visceral manner. No question, *Day of the Dead*—the third installment of Romero's *Dead Trilogy*—is Savini at the height of his powers as the splatter genre's only celebrity FX man.

"The makeup was the most realistic of the three movies," admits the self-proclaimed Wizard of Gore, who also contributed makeup effects for Romero's *Martin and John* of the *Dead* movies, along with another classics like *Damages*, *The Running of the Bulls*, *The Day of the Dead* when that thing with no face and a train was lying on the rails, that's a real body. Dick Smith, who is the greatest thing makeup artist in the world—he wrote the introduction to my second book—here's the one effect that lived even long."

It's no surprise to learn that history remembers the splatter genre chiefly in terms of its contribution to special effects. Savini's legacy of decapitations—heads exploding in showers of blood, impalements and eye-popping—reached a new level of grotesque when Romero's script called for walking corpses in various states of decomposition.

"That was very gory, very realistic," he admits. "On *Day of the Dead* [the zombies] were all different, and I got out of this at one time. One of the first shots we did was the arms coming through the wall. When they came through it was like, 'What a miracle! They're all different colors!' Well, yeah, because corpses don't always decay the same way. Different people would be different colors, there would be the most realistic position of the things. They were expecting them all to be grey skin."

Day of the Dead was a far cry from *Dead* of the *Dead*'s comparatively light, comic book horror approach to be sure. *Day's* dark, desolate and depressing tone, says Savini, was in part due to the adverse shooting conditions: the cast and crew were forced to endure.

"The location influenced the film," he notes. "Dead of the *Dead* was in a big open shopping mall with a bunch of water outside. We were on the roof, we were in the belly, we were in the streets—we were all over the place. We shot from 7 o'clock at night till 7 in the morning. With *Day of the Dead*, we were in a cave and we didn't see the sun for three months. We'd go in at 11 o'clock in the morning, come out at 7 o'clock at night, and it's already dark. We were living in an environment that was always 10 degrees and when you show your nose, think stuff comes out of the face. So we were in a claustrophobic cave. Our skulls were in the cave, our teeth were in the cave, the office were in the cave. Our

teeth was down the street—wherever we was it."

Difficult as it is, *Day of the Dead* is a unique and impressive addition to Romero's *Dead* trilogy, and much of it is due to Savini's amazing work on the film—the artist's gruesome special makeup effects lit the film's gory atmosphere perfectly. The discussion turns, perhaps inevitably, to the special effects in the home films of today and especially the rise of computer-generated images.

"There was a day when what you saw was right in front of your face," says Savini. "Back before the American film was in London any of my stuff. The one thing that had CG is that I did was *Paper Moon*'s 4th. *State* and it's fabulous. When it's done well, it's fabulous, like the remake of *The Mummy* you could never do that depth of damage with just makeup. But CG helps make-up artists [because] they still have others to create the look of stuff and to merge into whatever you're going to merge into. Like *Jurassic Park*: the animators were still in charge of the dinosaurs, the computer artists were the ones manufacturing them. It sounds strange coming from me, but the less you know, the better it is. The problem is that we've trained people to expect to reach out of a film that even big-budget movies now have gone given to them to take that expectation."

By the time *Another Day's* deluxe *Day of the Dead* 2-disc DVD is released (the which Savini contributed a few hours worth of behind-the-scenes video footage and commentary), the makeup legend and actor will be in Romero-filming a cameo appearance in Universal's big-budget remake of *Dead* of the *Dead*. Despite hours of debate, Savini fans vehemently decrying the summer production as the *Real*, Savini is decidedly accepting of the idea of Romero's all-time horror classic getting a second shot at the big screen.

"Well, you're talking to the guy who remade *Night of the Living Dead*," he laughs. "I got the same idea back then. 'What the fuck are you doing? How dare you?'"

Outside of his role in the movie on set, but Savini says he has a fairly good idea of what he'll be doing when the cameras roll.

"They know I was in the original movie, so they should just make me come out of the fountain as a zombie in a motorcycle jacket," he says. "I've been that same character now for an easy hundred I mean, think about it is *Angels in Hell* is a film, in *Dead of the Dead* I was a film, in *Dead of the Dead* I was a film. So in my mind I'm the guy from *Dead* who doesn't die when he gets the fountain. He goes off and becomes that living guy in *Angels in Hell* and after *Angels in Hell* he just gets on his bike and starts mauling and riding up at the *Big Brother*."



From the *Dead* *Day of the Dead* is "my masterpiece of splatter," says Tom Savini.

ROMERO'S CLASSIC CUT

TWO EVIL EYES (1988) DVD

Starring Adrienne Barbeau and Harvey Keitel
Directed by George Romero (Feds in the Case of M. Valenzuela) and Gerardo Argento (The Black Cat)
Based on original stories by Edgar Allan Poe
Blue Underground

It's unfortunate that *Two Evil Eyes* seemed to fall through the cracks not long after its initial release, because *The Feds in the Case of M. Valenzuela* surely ranks among George Romero's best work. Adapting classics — in this case two of Edgar Allan Poe's most popular tales — is always difficult job, and it's a pleasant surprise that Romero, a director whose adaptability has always been unfailingly evident (as opposed to awkward, should that be so), hits for *Two Evil Eyes*.

It's easy to see why Romero — in which Adrienne Barbeau and her boyfriend glad to take her dying husband of a lifetime — struck a chord with Romero. The extraordinary high price of greed has long been one of his favorite themes, and probably his single favorite. *Deadly Sin* is perfect. Of course, the unadapted double film king can never mind a working-copy opportunity, several of which present themselves here — this year you can't seem to escape his rule, and what's worse, he let Romero is also the most atmospheric of Romero's later works, a genuine creep-out that allows regarding the fact that he never directed any other giallo episodes.

By now, regular *Four* Romero readers must be used to (genre) mix of my reviews Argento-looking, but I've got to admit he usually himself admirably with *The Black Cat*. Here again, the director brings story of his own treatments — intense color references, odd point-of-view shots are fantastically vibrant and precise — but remains respectful enough of the source material that he never tries to make it his and his alone.

I've always felt that this particular project would have been a lot more interesting had it involved more than two collaborators. And here enough, the documentary that accompanies this film release confirms that Stephen King and John Carpenter were also approached, King declined on the grounds that he was no longer interested in directing film (it just gives his track record, who can blame him?), while Carpenter was otherwise engaged. Argento also reveals that both he and Romero originally had different stories in mind, recalling his initial plan to set



Joe Savino's handwork starts Romero's *Shining* Living Dead film

I hope so, and I'd hope that he's available.

Resident Evil is a movie where the effects were handled in a different way... It was interesting to me in the fact that King could get so much more with words or words, like *Day and Dawn* than other people could get with a multi-million dollar budget.

Same with me? [laughs] I don't know sometimes there's no affection for the genre by the people who are doing these films and, really, it's just an example to that. And the energy that goes into it is probably more honest. It's such a different time today too, you can't just get a bunch of people together and run off with a camera, you know.

That's too bad. Do you think Hollywood underestimates horror movies?

No, I think they see it as some kind of a cash cow — I think they see the best. Nobody would pressure to go out and make a comedy but everybody out there thinks they know how to make a horror film. As I say, it really comes down to affection for the genre and is having some sort of heart for what you're doing and I think that's probably the missing ingredient in Hollywood films.

Did you, in fact, coin the term "splatter cinema" to describe your movies? I don't remember coming that term. I think I may have been using it in interviews, but I'm pretty sure it was around — there were movies at that time that were called splatter films. I

don't remember coming it.

Do you make a distinction between splatter films and horror films?

I don't know there's such a question that's a pretty hard to say. I suppose *Evil Eyes* is more of a pure splatter film than a horror film and I think my movies (films probably are too but, as I said, I think of them more as horror and I think of them more in terms of their content and their behavior.

Before your *Dead* movies, centers were an extension of the shaven presented in Victor Halperin's 1933 film *White Zombie*. You took away the idea that they were subjugated to a "master" and democratized the idea that they were brought back from the grave, and Hollywood has been locked into three ideas of what a zombie is ever since. Do you see other possibilities for zombies or are you happy with what you've done to them?

My problem I think of is a particular way, they're a character to rise, so I don't ever think of making them any different, maybe developing them more, making them more like fish but certainly that's what's happening in the new scripts. They're getting scarier.

Maybe we'll finally get into a zombie's head.

[laughs]

What are you working on now?

I'm working on a project for ABC television that I'm not supposed to men-



The *PS* and *The Producer* is a present day South American documentary while Romero envisioned *The Masque Of The Red Death* as an AIDS parable.

The aforementioned festivity is a feast, including interviews with both directors. *PS* just film Scott, producer Claudio Argento and David's even famous daughter Ale, who's actually unrecognizable here, what with being fourteen-years-old and fully clothed. Other what in this gourmet fest will include two short. David repeats (you missing his work as the film, the other a highly entertaining tour of his times), a brief interview with the always-delicious Barbeau, plus the usual trailers, film and stills.

John W. Brown

son. They don't want me to say what it is because it could fit, theoretically something that could get knocked off somebody could beat us to it.

Is it a horror project?
Oh yeah.

Do you still like making horror, are you still interested in it?
I'm very interested in it, I'm the first guy there, in the theatre, when it opens. But, of course, I don't want to be stuck exclusively in it, but unfortunately that's what happens. You do get typecast.

Is there anything you've seen recently that has made an impression on you?
I'd have to say not very much recently. They have gone the way of big effects and they have a very few people that are working small and intimately. Hollywood would always rather spend more money. It's like all the famous monsters of filmland that they are read: the big *Demons* and the big *Frankensteins*, *The Mummy* and all that stuff - they've become these elaborate spectacles.



GEORGE A. ROMERO RETROSPECTIVE

There is obviously interest in having more stars and they may feel that they can compete more with something that delivers their idea of what the audience expects, which is a lot of action and more like the Indiana Jones movies.

Foreign movies seem to think out of the box in terms of the kinds of stories that Hollywood is telling. Do you think it's good that at least some of the executives are open to the idea of reviving these movies?

Yeah, that was what *The Thing* was but I don't think it was particularly scary - I preferred *Signs*. It took a set of conditions that were as outlandish as *The Ring* did but *The Ring* didn't do anything with it, at least nothing with the characters. I'm still waiting to be scared. ■

LIKE DOWN WITH THE MAN, MAN!

THE CRAZIES (1973) DVD

Starring: Harold Wayne Jones, Lloyd Haller and Lynn Lundy
Written and directed by George Romero
Rite Underground

Given the spotty and sporadic, self-entertainment time of most of his films, it's easy to imagine that Confession: George Romero would have been laid out near the top of Sander Gil McCaffrey's cinema snail's pace in the late 1970s. And while I'm sure his films aren't readily available at most home-ent outlets in Beijing - Western docu-fests, the Venice fest - there's no denying that Romero scored his most poorly on his left shore. The Center - in which a year's weather shows is suddenly stretched as a small Pennsylvania town - is the most overly full-length of his early film, antithetical to the point of death, and yet Romero tries with direction but the underground's terrible new film release.

Even City editors who haven't been killed or brainwashed into glooming homicidal submission by the above-mentioned split now have not only that concept: neighbors - in charge, but also it's prepared and trigger-happy military personnel - sound familiar? Yes, this is the same territory Romero would have made much more successfully (and with considerably more capital for your entertainment dollar) in *Days of the Dead* as well as *Day of the Dead*. Romero's preface to allowing his editors to break money like an all-out-out-out buffet comes through here; if you thought Richard Dreyfuss's *Close* performance was over-the-top, his turn in *The Center* is a one-way economy class ticket on the Center Express.

What really makes *The Center* worthwhile - for the sake of at least - is the glimpse it affords us of Romero slowly becoming more assured as a director, pulling the weight of technical skills he accumulated during commercial for use in a low-budget feature: as he had only a few years earlier in *Night of the Living Dead*. While not as remarkable in terms of style, it does make an interesting bridge between *Night* and *Shadows*, a long-time critical and fan favorite that would follow *The Center*.

Aside from a rich-looking restoration of the feature, which includes a commentary track with Romero and Rite Underground founder (and to mention: former director) William Lundy and a short feature on behind-the-scenes story Lynn Lundy (Romero's director is absent - his character creates scenes of unity and Lloyd Haller's). On a personal note, I don't often find Romero films antithetical to my own life - and I've graded his best - but most about that watching *The Center* during the recent SAGS outbreak here in Toronto was not a particularly memorable experience. "It's only a movie... only a movie... only a movie..."

John W. Brown



Day of the Dead says Romero "has become my favorite [movie] of the three"

SINGLE WHITE SOCIOPATH seeks same for life-long companionship and heavy blood play. Must like dolls, sewing and bloodsucking. **262353**

BY JEN VUCROVIC

WRITER/DIRECTOR LUCKY McKEE & ACTRESS ANGELA BETTIS DISCUSS THEIR LOW BUDGET, FRANKENSTEIN-INSPIRED MASTERPIECE OF LONELINESS AND MADNESS ON THE BRINK OF ITS WORLDWIDE RELEASE THIS SUMMER...

MAY:

monsters make the Best Friends

BY JEN VUCROVIC

Loneliness, as it is thought of by 20th Century existentialist philosophers, is an inescapable part of the human condition. It is a universal phenomenon experienced by every human and at some point in their lives and moves from our interactions with the world... or lack thereof. It can be excruciating and psychologically damaging. Frequently, the cure of loneliness is as built as force; that is can drive the most innocent beings to commit unspeakable acts to escape it. It is one of the real horrors of modern society and has been chronicled in countless horror stories of yore. Frankenstein's monster knows it, Stephen King's Carrie knows it, and now Lucky McKee's *May* Cassidy knows it — all too well.

"*May* is about loneliness really, and how to get through that in your own way," agrees writer/director McKee, adding that his movie is largely based on his own personal experiences growing up. "It's a fantasy, but it is very much based on my own life. I grew up in a real rural area and no one else into the same things as me until I went to the University of Southern California, and suddenly it was like everybody was into the same kind of stuff and I made a lot of friends on the surface level. But I learned that the more

you get to know somebody, you discover parts of their personality that you don't like and you kind of wish you could just stick with that thing that exists between the two of you. I thought, wouldn't it be cool to be able to take all of the parts of the people you like and combine them to make the perfect friend?"

This twisted vision, heavily influenced by the first book he ever read — Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* — led the 27-year-old director to write and direct his first feature, *May*, an unusual story about love and rejection, passion and pain, social misanthropy and murder, madness and dismemberment. *May* premiered as an Official Selection at the Sundance Film Festival in January 2002 and has garnered nothing but rave reviews and more awards and nominations than you can shake a severed eyelid at. Immediately after its premiere, Lions Gate Entertainment acquired the worldwide distribution rights to the film, and will be finally releasing it on video and DVD this July 16.

May is an astonishingly rich story that is, on the surface, a modern Frankenstein tale about a girl (Angela Bettis), who has a tiny eye and,



rejected by everyone she meets throughout her entire life, goes to the most extreme measures imaginable to "mask" the perfect friend. Forced to wear a patch over her weak eye as a child, May grows up as a social reject, unable to successfully interact with the world. As she attempts to find solace in people who seem like the perfect whole, May comes to the realization that most people are even less the sum of their parts. The trouble is some parts she really likes, others she doesn't.

"I was fascinated by that notion of putting together a creature out of all these different parts," says McKee, referring to the obvious influence Shirley's tale had on her film. "Obviously *Beetle* is a cool idea."

So begins the patchwork that is May's life. Obviously, May sews. She mends her own clothes and stitches up animals at the local animal hospital. She also finds solace in herself with a script as a form of education, reading about zoology as her and gets turned on by cable-channel sex stories. Certainly you find her from the get-go, but after several failed attempts at love, first with big-haired neurotic/egoistic fun Adam Loomery (Seth), followed by her sexy lesbian co-worker Polly (Pamela Franklin), May's flawed-but-popular platonic intermediary, culminating in a frighteningly accurate, stitched-together finale that beneath the dark comedy and gruesomely violent happenings in the story, McKee says that May is ultimately a horror film that is meant to haunt your heart.

"The film is general was intended to be a heartbreaker," he admits. "I love heartbreaker music from the '60s and '70s and was really trying to capture the spirit of that. It's also about the way you can be totally into somebody and care so much about them and not get that in return with the same intensity."

McKee ventured even farther back into his past while writing the script, which he penned for the first time as a teenager — around the same age Shelby was when she wrote *Frankenbitch* — to expose some very old emotions from childhood. Specifically, he says, they were painful memories of girly social interaction as a result of his physical appearance.

"I have a larynx," reveals the writer/director. "I had to wear a patch over it in kindergarten which throughout your weak eye until you start wearing glasses, which corrects the eye as long as you wear them. So if I took my glasses off, my eye would cross. That made for some pretty awkward social situations."

Like McKee, *Beetle* was also born with a larynx and was able to identify with May's character on a level that few people could. She became instantly familiar with the character's sense of helplessness, desire for acceptance and social rejection and admits she was attracted to the story at first because it was so private and made her shed tears the first time she read the script.

"I had to wear a patch over my eye too for a while when I was young in this film definitely brought back some memories," she reveals. "Mine's actually a little bit stronger than Lucky's. I guess as I progressed as a child I learned to take control of it and then, unless I get tired, then it starts to drift outward. However, I had to wear contacts while shooting because my eye wasn't wandering the right way. May's eye eye had to wander inward because Lucky's goes in that May is modeling after her,"

Not surprisingly, *Beetle* spent a great deal of her time



Beetle Frankenbitch: Lead actress Ashley Butler and director Lucky McKee stitch together a complex character



"I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT NOT ENOUGH HORROR FILMS ARE BEAUTIFUL." -LUCKY MCKEE

actually studying McKee in order to prepare for the role.

"In a lot of ways, I just imitated her," she says. "It's really for story; it comes straight out of her because this story is so personal to her. I studied Lucky intensely to get into May's headspace."

The director credits the success of the film in large part to Better's much-touted performance as the role. McKee's well-developed, emotionally intense character combined with Better's relaxed (and, at times, almost playful) performance allowed her to switch back and forth between May's varying psychological states remarkably well.

"I didn't want somebody I had to puppet, and Angela just rolled the character on her own," claims McKee. "It was a really personal thing for me and she just brought so much to it that was her own. She revealed some things

that were very personal to her as well to get this character—I can hear a lot for this film."

Unquestionably, this deeply personal feature is what makes May's story strike resonant chords with so many people. Like *Ammonites*, it also functions as "social commentary" in that May is a "monster" whom society rejects solely on the basis of her appearance and violence becomes her last resort. In many ways, this kind of loneliness breeds and fosters in society and it is refreshing to see a movie bring that serious, dramatic intensity back to the horror genre. McKee attributes the film's ability to disturb viewers to his deliberate attempt to avoid the notion of "genre" while making the picture.

"It's hard to scare people when the characters in the movie face it; they're in a horror

movie," he offers. "I guess it worked in *Scream* to some extent, but at the stuff that came after that had a real bad impact on horror: they were like parodies and not taking the genre seriously. But I think horror is a genre that should be taken seriously because we're dealing with really serious, dark, psychological stuff."

May is ultimately an in-depth character study that starts with a bang and builds slowly throughout the rest of the film. It opens with a blood-curdling scream and the horrific image of May gasping out her own eye with a pair of latex gloves, then promptly flashes back to a young May asking her mother what is wrong with her big eye.

"It's most interesting to me to let everyone know what's going on right off the bat," notes the director of why he chose to open the film this way. "Then they know what's going to happen in the movie but they have to wait for it. That's more entertaining to me than just coming out and saying 'SCOO!' which I kind of got out of my system with the opening anyway. This gives time to build the character while knowing it is going to turn into a horror film, which was always my intention."

A horror film that also features a hauntingly creepy cat—"Scary"—May's best and only friend, which she keeps in a glass case that begins to develop a crack near the beginning of the film. The crack is a striking metaphor for May's fracturing psyche because it grows as the film—and her madness—progresses. Big eyes, pale and very eerie.

Scary was handmade by the film's production designer, Leslie Kwei, and was inspired by both Smith's and Better's appearance along with Miller and Margaret Stone paintings, which McKee refers to as "those '70s oil paintings of children with the gigantic cat eyes."

"Also, my mom had a doll named Scary that she still has," he says, "and it has those big blue glass eyes that grew and grew on their own. There was always something so creepy about those eyes, they weren't human but they had a little quality to them. A lot of horror movies I've grown up just seeing boxing dolls in them so we figured it would be best to make one of our own."

Of course, Scary wouldn't be nearly as frightening without a particular soundtrack that comes in from off the limited film, a sound that takes its visual cues from Martin Scorsese's *Shoeshoeshoe* and Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse*—incidentally, both stories about loneliness in modern society. For the film's dual composition of intense light and shadow, however, McKee also drew from Pre-Raphaelite art.

"You a big fan of Pre-Raphaelite oil paintings, like John Everett Millais," he says. "We tried to transpose that look to the film with the cinematic lighting we used and the design overall so it wouldn't look too modern, in kind of give it a timeless feel. I wanted it to be dark, of course but I always wanted it to be seen



A Powerful Misogynist: May is a teenage girl who is meant to break your heart. *Carolyn Kasper*

through a filter or heavily because I've always thought that not enough horror films are feminist." I think John Carpenter's films are really beautiful in a twisted way. They're just so deeply male and there's so much offensive paid to what colour does to your heart."

With his best of talent, it's hard to believe May is McKee's first solo feature. He made his directorial debut in 1994 with *All Cheerleaders Die*, an independent zombie film he co-wrote and directed with Chris Swenson, long-time friend and USC alumna. Swenson also directed *Jack and Jill*, the recently released short starring Jim Carrey. Adams chose May is the film (which also features some of the actors who starred in *All Cheerleaders Die*). Because they were both out of the school with undergraduate degrees in screenwriting, McKee and Swenson knew they had to be the chance of getting their first project going with any production companies as they produced it themselves, with the aid of a handful of friends a year after they graduated from college.

"We were looking at horror magazines and seeing how people were making these great films in a dorm and getting distribution at impressive levels so we were like 'let's make one,'" laughs McKee. "So we decided to make a zombie movie about a bunch of football players—it's just a real simple story but we just wanted to get our first feature out of the way."

All Cheerleaders Die was written, shot, edited and posted at home by the two first-time directors with a digital camera and one of the early

desktop editing systems.

"We just did everything ourselves with what we had and basically got ourselves through feature school doing that," reveals McKee, who never acquired distribution for *Cheerleaders* but is hoping that once May is released that people will start asking for it (which worked for Sam Raimi and *Blither the Woods*, except this is one you might actually see).

With the success of May, the well-proclaimed Davis Argentine female says he adores horror films and plans to make many more in the near future. McKee and Watts have formed up again to make an independent follow-up to May titled *Roman*—a story McKee has fast scribbled before May.

"We've totally switched roles," reveals Watts. "Lucy's playing Roman and I'm directing the film. We're taking a lot of fun with it. Roman is sort of a better play or pulp version of May."

The structure of the story is also inverted; Roman starts out entirely mad and gets progressively sane throughout the course of the film. Although this is Watts' first attempt at directing, she says she will be drawing her acting skill to the task as she is constantly directing as her own head as the work.

"Lucy asked me to direct Roman and I agreed if he would submit to playing the male character," she says, adding that McKee had already been through a dozen roles for the part and none of them were quite suited for it. "Because this story is also so deeply personal to me, he's the only one who can do it."

Roman is being shot on digital video in and around an apartment complex in Los Angeles, once again with the aid of the same group of good friends and a few actors.

McKee's next genre passion that you will most definitely get a chance to see is fitted. The Woods his first big budget picture which promises to be a synthesis of horror themes reminiscent of *Suspense* and *The Evil Dead*. The story takes place in 1980 at a school for girls set in the middle of a creepy wood and focuses on a quirky girl with fire-red hair shaped like an *ice 9*. There is something mysterious going on in the woods, and McKee's covered anti-bomb is poised to reward us with a lightning and violent "real love" of the dating stage. The director guarantees an original story with supernatural occurrences that will scare you out of your britches.

Pre-production on *The Woods* begins in late July with shooting commencing early fall. Until then, we have the May DVD, which features a commentary by the entire cast and crew. Expect the film to receive a limited North American theatrical release in major cities in mid-June, which is very well since McKee knows this film will ultimately find its audience on video and DVD.

"Lucas Gato is baffled by how to market the film because they think it is so obscure," he says, "but if people think May is obscure, then they have no idea what I have sitting in my back." E

BACK IN 1977, THEY BROUGHT
VOODOOBILLY DEMENTIA TO THE
PUNK MOVEMENT.

THIS YEAR, THEY
PUKE UP THEIR ROOTS....

STAYING SICK WITH THE CRAMPS

BY ROB GEDDING

Despite the best intentions, it usually takes the average horror buff some thinking to make a link between rock 'n' roll and our beloved genre. Sure, people like Alice Cooper and The Misfits came to mind for all the obvious reasons, but this is the best 2-grade horror you always have to dig a little deeper to get at the real thing and—20 years after they first crawled out of the graveyard—The Cramps remain the real thing.

Back in 1973, The Cramps were adding to the punk revolution by developing themes they would eventually absorb to the status of gospel: B-horror, trash sex, vampire chic and a general lust affair with decadence. Spurred out of the bag procedure (none of post-war, post-monster Las interior and hotel girl with machine gun) Phase by Rosebuck (the machine gun in question being a 1944 Greco (Clay Allen) pistol), along with a healthy dose of baroque robes and

sticked-up wigs (one resembling an animal pelt), hair and chains, The Cramps defied definition in their slow rise out of the festering swamp and into the glaring neon-light of cultism.

Like the creepiest cowards, The Cramps suffered out on an awful lot of times like *House of Wax*, *Eye See Music* and *I Was A Teenage Werewolf*, early numbers that embodied the punk ethos while exorcising the spirit of the films in the dim light of late-night speakeasies. With successive albums, the band broadened their palette, notably rockabilly baroque for their 1980 release *A Date With A Hate House* (writing on a subterranean cocktail of horror, baroque and B-horror with their 1982 album *City of the No Dead*), as their horrific album, appropriately called *Phases of Love* (and, The Cramps reveal that they have changed previous titles since their earliest days).

"I think the only thing that makes this album different for us is that

we finally said fuck it — we don't have to pay attention to anybody else, we can just do what we want," says Las Interior who leapt out of the cover of the latest album in a 2-minute pose complete with flags and balloons. "I can't help to think that made us more focused and less confused by a bunch of people prying at us which we've never tried to let influence us in the past anyway. We've always been hermits and with this album we were really able to be hermits about it."

Interior is referring to the fact that *Revenge of the Cramps* is the first album that The Cramps have released entirely by themselves, on their label Vengeance Records. Copying the new album sounds like any other Cramps album in the saying that all lower words can carry — first got the subtitle, everyone else is a square. Sure, *Revenge of the Cramps* has the regular Cramp Clomp — heavy-duty vocals featuring themes morbid and porno, with guitar fast-times in a weird, retro-sound style.

"I do like music to be dramatic with the least amount of words and the least amount of explanations and I'm always thinking, how can I strip it down to its bones and still have it robust and long, you know?" says Ivy. "It's weird, because my playing is tough and violent but there is some kind of girl quality about it — not like the female singer that it's women, but I think there's a beauty — a prettiness to it — that you could say is girl."

Music fans will know that The Cramps' last effort with the genre was ended right from the start, in early glam rock numbers like *Human Fly*, *Confessions of A Psychotic*, and *I Ain't Nuthin' But A Country Boy*. Later, the band would achieve some degree of notoriety when their horns began appearing in horror movies like *Star 80*, *Tron*, *Chameleon*, *Masters of the Living Dead*, for which they wrote the winning new classic called *Surfer Dead*.

"I think we were born sick," laughs Ivy of their love of horror movies. "I don't know why some people like horror and gore. I think maybe only our psychological mind knows it's a really good question but it's a mystery to be us. We can't figure out why people are excited about what they're excited about, but we're turned on by horror — we like getting scared, we like the tension and we like the sex that's in these movies. And I know it's not for everybody because we notice the effect when we're on tour and watching these movies, once the blood starts flowing, people start going."

The band's rising low profile as

the big scores haven't been intentional, she says.

"We really don't have a policy with respect to what lower than us houses make us," she says. "It's pretty much a case by case basis. Some movies are better than others, obviously, but we have no strict policy and some of our music is not even covered by us so we don't really have a say in that."

Revenge of the Cramps takes the retrograde retrograde spirit of the movie from which the title is taken — like *Watts 1961* crime thriller *Revenge of the Cramps* — and leaves a retro platoon of junk discographies 13 songs long from it. It somehow makes sense that they would reference a movie that barely qualified as a footnote in the history of hard cinema, but then again, The Cramps were coming from here. *Revenge of the Cramps* leaves more long before anyone knew who the Godfather of Gore was.

"I guess there's a high level of beauty and real personal creativity that went into those horror movies," says Interior. "It's more interesting because these things are like what we consider folk art, they're things that our people have an



THE CRAMPS
TOUGH TEN
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"ROCK AND ROLL IS BOUND THROUGH TIME TO BE QUESTIONED FOR MURDERS."

-LUX INTERIOR

class of, and real people make happen, as opposed to when someone states it needs today and you're getting up and have a meeting with lawyer assistants and filters lawyers in something and before long the movie doesn't make any sense at all. Herschell Gordon Lewis - here's somebody who made their movies and it was him and his friend Steve Finkstein basically who did all this stuff. And these movies are more valuable today than a lot of major motion pictures because they're a real look - the women in his pictures were probably wearing the clothes that they bought and not some team of costume designers come up with, and they were filmed in places that really existed and all that. I think it's an much more interesting because you're actually seeing a view of real life, and that's not something you get easily."

Not surprisingly, they admit that the best good movie they saw was Lewis' gore-soaked sequel, *Blood Feast 2*.

"We saw a pre-production cut and I was shocked that after all this time has gone by, it's just another Herschell Gordon Lewis movie," he says. "There's something great about that."

The *Gramps* fascination with vintage gore has extended from its moves to collectible memorabilia, notably rare comic books which they have been collecting for over twenty-five years and that literally occupy roomlets in their Los Angeles home.

"We pretty much have most of them," says Interior. "We have most of the ones from the '40s and '50s to all the golden age stuff. It's a pretty complete collection, all the *Flash* Wolverine stuff, all of those weird independent compa-

nies. I always think it's funny when people say 'why do you like all that old stuff, you know, you're way behind the times' or something. Well, we like that old stuff because it's way better than anything that's happening now, for the most part. Of course, there are great things happening now and we do like popular culture and we have great hope for certain things, but there's no reason to forget the things that happened in the past."

Which brings us to something that may best be forgotten - the band's eccentric connection to homicide in Toronto, Canada. Originally, it was ex-drummer Nick Four who was held for questioning during a Toronto stay after having witnessed a murder during a morning walk. The following year, it was Interior's turn to be brought in for questioning, this time on a separate crime.

"I went out to get coffee at 4 a.m., or something like that and this punk [guy walked up and said 'Lus, what are you doing out here?'] he explains. "And I said, 'well I'm looking for coffee' and she said 'there's no place to make coffee right now, come over to my place and I'll make you a cup.' So we went to her house and somebody had been murdered in the apartment next to her and I know that it means like I'm making this up but it's the exact truth. And the cops looked at me and my hands - first of all I wear black gloves and I always have black on my hands after we play and I also had my cane from *Blowing the Eric* stand around - I looked like a big punk in other words. Anyway, I had markings running down my face and everything and the cops took one look at me and they said 'okay, decent wrists, right of the scene?' Rock and roll is bound through time to be questioned for murders."

Perhaps that may explain why The Gramps entertain the idea of playing shows before society's most heinous criminals, following in the footsteps of their legendary show at the *Wipe State Mental Asylum*.

"One time I tried to organize something at a prison in the Midwest," says Ig. "I took it was near Minneapolis or something, but I got through it's not sure why. I can never recall the details of why something almost happened or didn't. But what we really want to do is a gig at the *Intercept Prisoner's Prison*, 'cause that's what Wanda Jackson sings about in *Not in Cash* (look up, she's singing about the *Telegraph*). That would be like the other dream thing besides the *Wipe*. The Gramps live at the *Telegraph*. But even the most prison could be interesting, definitely Mental hospitals first, prisons next and I don't know what after that. We like the *Johnny Cash* tradition of playing for people who have for one reason or another come to trouble. We'll come to them. It could be us, you know, it's a fine line sometimes: how close are you to doing something that's going to get you locked up for good? Who knows?"



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He adapted Clive Barker's *Books of Blood* and Richard Matheson's *I Am Legend*, and his comic book masterpiece is being taken to Hollywood by Sam Raimi. Suddenly, Steve Niles is the medium's hottest property.

THE DARK KNIGHT OF 30 DAYS

By Chris Barker

Perhaps no man understands the concept of a young boy's journey into night quite the way that Steve Niles does. A comic writer and entrepreneur who launched his own imprint and managed to secure a contract to adapt Clive Barker's *Books of Blood* at the age of nineteen, Niles has been trying to sell his own story, *30 Days of Night*, since he first came up with its core idea in the mid-'80s: put vampires in a place where the sun doesn't shine (Alaska, that is).

Last year, Niles' tenacity payed off when *30 Days* was published as a three-part comic miniseries by the then-upstart imprint IDW. Ironically, before the second issue was even released, Sam Raimi had purchased the rights to turn it into a movie - Niles' original goal. *Blue Man* caught up with Niles in June, on the eve of the release of *Dark Days*, the sequel to *30 Days of Night*.



How did you meet Clive Barker, and, if successful, what was he like to allow you to adapt his work?

I met him while helping him to launch his local film festival. Clive was very generous to even consider allowing me to publish his books as comics. I had never published a thing, but he worked very hard to make sure I got the rights. It was probably because we became friends and it was obvious how enthusiastic I was. I have no idea what he really saw in me; I was a lot of a *young book* then.

Which of your Books of Blood adaptations is your favorite?

I have two. The Ventrans And Jack and John. I like the last. Adapting's a tricky thing. I have learned my own best nights are the ones where the adaptation brings something to the material except figuring out how to bring the story to life.

You have also adapted Richard Matheson's I Am Legend. What were Matheson's thoughts on your version?

Aside by I didn't meet Matheson face-to-face until just a few months ago at a signing. He shook my hand and said I'd done a great job. I got drunk and staggered. Matheson was the guy who actually got me into comic - he's also the first author I ever read. Afterward, I got the rights to *I Am Legend* as one of my favorite memories. I wrote Matheson a letter saying how important it was to me and to learn and how I felt it had been so poorly adapted and once that book was done. He wrote me back almost immediately and said that I would have the rights for a hundred dollars (I paid back) was that I had to include the book? To this day, I'm amazed by his generosity and I can only hope I represented the novel well. The last reason will be related to get volume clearly by 2009, so we'll get the one huge world in books yet.



Steven Miller's post-modern vampire blood from the pens of artist Ben Tempelmeier



While I like these scenes, I think some of the terror was removed, because no matter what we put to paper, the human mind can always think of something worse. At least mine can.

But the movie-going public: Is there any imagination at the door? You're writing the screen adaptation for 30 Days. What have you done with the vampire attack there?

The vampire attacks are detailed, graphic and relentless. I went only with them in the screenplay because I had some new toys, movement, sound and blood.

At what point is artist Ben Tempelmeier basically running with your bat?

Ben's incredible. They gotta be making that. We met and worked exclusively via e-mail and instant messaging for all of 30 Days, and I don't know what is to tell you, other than that via e-mail. We have a great dossier level that we had the script. I saw page one of 30 Days. He made it. He made the story work.

At what point in the writing process were you aware of what would be the topic conclusively 30 Days?

When I realized that the core story wasn't about vampires at all — it was a love story. Plus, it was concluding to kill them, so I knew it had a good chance of being glorified.

Though Eddie becomes a vampire, he represents all the ego and egoism in the

community the vampire needs single-handedly. This suggests, then, that there is a choice in vampirism.

In the 30 Days world, vampires gradually lose their humanity, they become a different being, incapable of feeling love or sympathy for humans. That's part of the loss. In the end, Eddie states that he doesn't want to know if he can remember what it feels like to love people. That was his way of saying he was taking the bite, and his humanity.

After 30 a page of the 30 Days sequel, 30 Days 2.

It picks up where 30 Days left off. We jump a few months ahead and follow Sofia, who has written a book about what happened to Eddie and is setting off to promote it. Obviously, she's trying to live out the subplot so she can preserve Ben and Eddie's story to write the vampire primer *Inside Circle Three*, we didn't have to do Vampires in New York. The biggest step needed to be to follow the survivors. I like Sofia, she's beautiful and tough without being too T2, if you know what I mean. I wanted to give her a normal person's life but would have vampires as a way of coping with a terrible loss.

And you as all concerned follow the 30 Days film, knowing the point what happened to them Hell?

Firstborn worried. It's an issue. Eddie's death. Eddie's a horror-plug. They have to be in a

"The vampire attacks are detailed, graphic and relentless"

— STEVE NILES ON THE 30 DAYS OF NIGHT FILM ADAPTATION.

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Raven visits some friends.



Nightshade visits Salem.



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North America's leading festival of alternative cinema has re-opened its doors following last year's impromptu cancellation. Program director **MITCH DAVIS** gives us the scoop on the festival's horror contingent.



TERROR AT

Horror! After its unforeseen and impromptu cancellation last year, the world-renowned international film festival known as Fantastic returns with a bloody vengeance. The 2003 feature-film lineup will give audiences an early glimpse at some horror films from around the globe, including (if Italy's *Giallo Fever*, Don Coscarelli's *Batthe Me Up*, Stuart Gordon's *King of the Aunts*, Victor Salva's *Japanese Creepers 2*, Oliver Hirschbiegel's *Apocalypse Now Part 2*, the *Pumpkin* Brothers' *The Day and the Night*, and the Spanish actor-director Paul Naschy's "return to gothic horror." The three-week event will run July 17 to August 10 at the Imperial Cinema in Montreal, Quebec.

Festival co-founder Mitch Davis, the director of international programming and a filmmaker in his own right (having produced the underground thriller *Subversiveless Creativity* and directed *Divided into Zero* for his own induction film), guarantees that this year's Fantastic will more than make up for the longer-than-usual wait.

"It's always fun to do this," Davis told *Raw Magazine*, "but since we were forced to cancel last year's fest, we found ourselves in the unique position of being able to choose from the most interesting genre films produced over a two-year span instead of the usual twelve to sixteen months. *Batthe Me Up*, for example, was originally scheduled to have its world premiere at Fantastic last year. Don Coscarelli's a good blend of the fest—having launched *Phantasm: Asylum of the Evil* '86—and he had approached us about the film before we even knew it was com-

pleted. When we had to postpone the show to this year, *Batthe Me Up* was at the top of the list. As for some of the other titles, the people at HOME, Lions Gate, and Cinéma Vérité have always been huge supporters of the festival and genre film is ground."

In addition to the aforementioned high-profile genre titles, fans can also expect a slew of new horror movies on the 2003 festival roster that Davis feels will be making waves worldwide in the weeks and months following their festival screenings in Montreal.

"One of the films at the very top of the list would have to be a French film—well, a French film shot in English, in LA, with a US cast—by the writer of *Dead End*," he says. "It's a cross between the nightmarish *Sleepwalkers* you've ever seen and *Shogun* like *Phantom* and *Conjuring of Souls*. It's a family takes a weekend during their annual Christmas trip and ends up in a marauding dream world that just doesn't end. Whenever they stop drinking, someone dies horribly, so all they can do is keep pressing forward as things get more and more nightmarish. This one was a total surprise for us; it came out of nowhere and blew us away."

"*Shockle* (Kenji's *Shockle* *SM*) is another one," adds Davis. "It's the ultimate talk-to-the-wall Japanese zombie movie, directed with a captivating visual flair. In alternate title it's really *Dead Mountain All Out Attack*. I mean, how cool is that? We can't wait to see it on the big screen."

Suicide Club is another one that Davis says horror fans will not want



2003 FESTIVAL PREVIEW

FANTASIA

BY NATHAN TYLER

to mass. He refers to it as "one of the most intense scenes of violence and/or horror that I've seen in a long time."

"We're also doing a spotlight on the documentary film work of Richard Stanley," he continues, "with screenings of *Wicker of the Moon*, *The Secret Story* and *The White Darkness*, lovely screened films about war, mysticism, and warlike that are as intellectual as anything Stanley's ever done. These are amazing films that really deserve the chance to be seen."

Doyle adds that the festival will also have an all-star-coverage carling of zombie movies.

"In a strange way, it can almost be said that the best zombie movies have been the best of the zombie as far as international genre films are concerned," he says. "Hence, we've got *Raymond Is a Monster*, *Plaga Zombie*, *Zona Mortale* from Argentina, *Miedo Sangre* from Spain, the German-Canadian *Sawyer of the Dead*, Australia's *Deadend*, and *Shogunzoo Alive* from Canada. That's a lot of zombie for one year of this production and that doesn't include *28 Days*

Later, which hits screens a few weeks before the fest."

Doyle also recommends horror fans keep a lookout for a movie called *Apocalyptic*, a British film about a telepathic hypnotherapist who helps Scotland find love for a mutant serial killer.

"The same apocalyptic sound about creepy but this is one of the most intelligent and cinematic genre films of the year," he says.

Doing *Mr. Shaw's New World* is yet another first, which Doyle calls "a very bleak, almost existential horror film" from Hong Kong about blood demons being haunted by the ghost of a woman who died in spite of their transference, while her husband — who received the same transference — survived, leaving the couple apart.

"What the doctors don't realize was that their act of charity interrupted a suicide pact!" he says.

Aside from the showcase of cutting-edge genre films, a major draw of the festival is the chance for fans to meet and mingle with the

special guests — all infinite offer for hardcore horror fans and something rarely seen at other film festivals. But the really special facet of Fantasia, under Doyle, is the fans themselves.

"What is so wonderful is seeing crowds of a thousand mostly young people lining up to see movies and often challenging films from Spain, Japan, Scandinavia — you name it — which fills in the face of the audience demographics that teenage and twenty-something audiences in North America never reading subtitles or won't see a film that isn't headlined by major stars," he says. "Our audience is very progressive and open-minded. But just the same, I don't believe that this is an isolated freak phenomenon. I truly think it shows just how badly people want to see films that have new points of view and are somehow different."

Drop in to www.fantasialethal.com for the complete schedule and ongoing updates for this year's festival screenings and check in next issue for our festival report. See you there!



PITCH BLACK

HOW HORROR MOVIES, COMIC BOOKS AND '60S GARAGE ROCK INFLUENCED ONE OF TODAY'S MOST ORIGINAL **HORROR PUNK** OUTFITS.

BY ADAM LITVIN

In the world of horror punk, it's rare to find a band as enlightened as the lads in California's Pitch Black. From the sales of ghost posters The Three Agents and their punk outfit Surfer SS, this unique and introspective band of merry friends rose to headline Pitch Black, a band fascinated not only with '60s garage music, horror films and comic books of all kinds. The difference here is that Pitch Black weren't content to simply sing the praises of the dead. They actually put it a little thought.

"Our songs are horror-inspired but not meant to be taken as pure horror," says vocalist/bassist Michael Monroe. "We have this song called Serial Medved and it talks about this mad scientist in his lab doing all sorts of experiments, but it's actually a love song about relationships. It's about making love to Frankenstein-like creatures. It's for people trying to find relationships because you're taking something that is not really meant to be and forcing it to be something that is."

While the garage influence does come across in the band's laid-driving music, what is more noticeable is a striking use of horror comic imagery, both on the band's album artwork and in their lyrics. Indeed, last year's post-9/11 debut on Sire Records' last hip horrors is the

band's very own 2002 year-end pot in the Best Album Awards category.

"I write a big lot of comics like *Blat of Horror* when I was a kid," says guitarist/bassist and co-founder Kevin Cross. He also admits to being a fan of the early black and white, those the German representations of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* to anything starring Edward G. Robinson. Josh Monroe feels lonely in the States members Louis Fuld and Denis Agents along with a variety of censored films, while Monroe admits he only recently considered himself a horror fan, but admits education by anything dark and introspective.

"I like anything that's really enlightening," he says. "*Jacob's Ladder*, *Dance Music*, and the *Other* [bookend] stuff is really, honestly, and often under on different levels."

The band is named not by a fourth member, keyboardist Daniel Horne, who reflects the band's aggressive and abrasive mood. The decision to add that instrument in particular, says Cross, was two-fold.

"When I was listening to all those '60s garage bands, I realized what really separated them from today's punk bands was that they used keyboards and they could make their sound mean" he says. "This is something I only

thought would be cool to bring to this band. The other thing is that keyboards can bring a really creepy atmosphere to a song, similar to a church organ. Church is scary, after all. The use of an organ in a religious hymn just paints the picture in my head of Vincent Price in *Dr. Phibes*. That sort of sound really speaks a language."

A language that perfectly complements the only darkness of songs like *The Week*, *Destructive Colours*, *Feeling Place* and *Powerful Motion*.

"We sing about darkness because, well, if we were sleeping about that it just wouldn't be right," adds Monroe. "It's all about the dark and it goes back to rock 'n' roll. There's a rich tradition at the dark and the dark side of things. It's the when Robert Johnson told his soul at the crossroads. At that moment there was an undeniable and unchangeable connection between the bad side of things and rock 'n' roll. Then in the '60s you had the religious right saying rock 'n' roll is the devil's music when everyone was just looking to have a good time. So, everyone knows it's more fun to party with the gay devils than the gay upstairs." That your world Black at www.pitchblack133.com. E

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28 Days Later: George Romero's complicated zombie movie is nothing more than a cheap thrill

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28 DAYS LATER

Starring Cillian Murphy and Naomie Harris
Directed by Danny Boyle
Written by Alex Garland
Fox Searchlight

I don't know how *28 Days Later* arrived in your country of residence, but in Canada, this thing blew in like the apocalypse on unapologetic promotional hype, a savvy advertising campaign and enough marketing muscle to put Rick Astley back in the top ten. "The End is Extremely Fooking Nigh!" read the stickers, a tag tagline for first cinematic Gen-Xer Danny (Frodo) Boyle's ultra-rick crack at a zombie flick.

Elsewhere in these pages, zombie daddy George Romero makes a statement to the effect that every mainstream director thinks they can make a horror film. The part he left out was that most of them get shows up, embarrassed by the most deeply鄙夷 sample genre of genres. It happened to Coppola with *Dracula*, to Van Sant with *Psycho* — hell, even Kubrick's *Shining* had major design flaws (the poor Stephen King never stops pointing out) — and so it comes as no surprise that Boyle would take much in-way and as much filmmaking talent only to blow his resume on the dead-zo "zombie" film

that pretty much comes across as a poor man's Day of the Dead (and an expensive one at that).

A few details: *28 Days Later* spills onto the screen with the flair of a soda commercial for the Olympics, quick cuts of a monkey in a lab and a subsequent accident lead to some batonets of the sun setting over an abandoned London skyline, the stuff Romero never had a budget to pull off, though I'm sure he wished he did. Jim (Cillian Murphy) wakes in a hospital in the middle of the city — 28 days later — only to realize this civilization has all but crumbled during his month-long sleep. A sign from amount of atmosphere made these scenes the choice cuts for trailers and press kits, but they did too soon.

Jim quickly hooks up with a couple of survivors, including Selma (Harris), the kind of tough girl who steps over the complexities of Lou Casella's Sarah (from *Day*) for the cardboard facade of Jennifer Love's Michelle Rodriguez. A couple of scenes later, everyone's dead except for Jim and Selma but — no worries — the two run into another pair, Robert Frank and his main daughter Hannah. What unfolds from there is a reading of serials, full of breathy cinematic ruminations floured by the music of John Murphy (think *Raiders*), nice dialogue, a little humor, a nice family picture and the occa-

sional shoot out with the occasional zombie — all very elegant but entirely misplaced. By the time the group ends up at a Gothic mansion overgrown by a powertripping railway platform (they've even got their resident fish chained in the yard), well, the whole thing just retards the steps Romero took fifteen odd years ago.

Apparently, Boyle has stated that *28 Days Later* is not a horror movie, and he's bang on. It couldn't be, really, mostly because — like many before him — the man doesn't understand what a horror movie is. Ironically, his film takes so much from the genre (and gives back so little), that it's entirely inappropriate of him to distance himself from it in the first place. *28 Days Later* is a modern zombie movie, no question, ultra-top, gorgeously shot and a critical wash free from start to finish, easily one of the biggest disappointments of the calendar year. You read it here first.

Rod Gaudin

RIGHTING THE WRONGS

WRONG TURN

Starring Seannyn Harrington
Elise Dushko and Jeremy Sisto
Directed by Rob Schmidt
Written by Alan B. McElroy
20th Century Fox

Dumped like your ultra-rinky co-grad-friend, Fox's pre-summer horror back 'em up *Wrong Turn* arrived without much fanfare and NO preview screening. Which means I had to pay full price on a Wednesday night to see this shenanigans. I want a chance! What are I saying?! I loved this movie. Let me start over.

Wrong Turn is a great, tight, too little backwoods horror that refreshingly has the balls to play it straight, no magic, magic, weak, weak, self-referencing. Serious fellow bullies here. Which is why I suspect many critics were indifferent, so simplistic as the film they appear, it's actually a brave, no nonsense and intelligent amalgam of *Deliverance*, *Chaplin's Monsieur* and *The Hills Have Eyes* with a pretty boy/girl cast and very messy murder. After being, morose problem like *Dumbest Film*, it's exactly what the multiplex needs.



Holly horror runs its old lady in the surprisingly hot *Swing Girls*

The plot is old hat, a bunch of good-looking young people take a — wait for it — wrong turn, get lost in the woods and cross paths with a truly fascinating, idiotic, cannibalistic mountain man. They run, they hide, they die — in truly, delightfully ludicrous ways. That's about it really. What *Swing Girls* lacks in plot dynamics, it more than makes up with decent acting, likable characters, tolerable drama and great jokes. The Dolby digital sound system is exploited effectively as screams, cries, moanings and belated meat flails with words can shattering fustian. The villains are creepy and over-the-top and there's more than one scene that will surely have you digging your talons into your partner's forearms.

Producer Stan Winston is to be commended for sticking in his guts and making a horror thriller that goes for the papulas, never slipping to snark at the more delicate members of the audience. Rob Schrab's directing veers from flaccid dogma hand-held silliness to almost adorably operatic full-throttle galle-on-pedals sci-fi junks. So what if the film bombed? It'll find its cult on home video and I'd welcome a sequel.

I liked this movie a lot. \$13.98 well spent (for all you neo-Canadian readers: that's how much we fraction pay per person). *Chris Allen* and *Chris Allen*

How the wheels thing up with a meaner video. Alright!

Shawn Soza's *Swing Girls* is all that and — incredibly — less, due to an awful plot in that old Asian cliche of having a story with too many places to go. Nevertheless, *Swing Girls* is still a noteworthy achievement and the kind of movie that ends great on paper. Here's the premise: fifty-five high school girls commit suicide on their way jumping out onto the subway tracks while holding hands. Needless to say, the cops are hugely preoccupied, and not just by the unforgettable sight of a subway train drenched in gore. Pretty soon, the new kid is sweeping across the city, girls and boys are inexplicably red-doubling school yards and middle-class live-over-gate vacations thrown from roofs.

Enter Detective Karada, who takes charge of the investigation. He turns his attention to a white bag that mysteriously appears at each death scene. In it is a 300-foot roll of human flesh crushed together like a greasy wisp of decaying bacon. It turns out that everyone in this "suicide pact" has had a piece of their flesh cut and stuffed into the roll, but why is anyone's guess. This would appear to have a counterpart in a bizarre website that keeps tabs on the suicides without ever explaining why.

Like his Japanese peers, writer/director Shawn Soza scores some major points with his handling of a truly bizarre selection of imagery and cinematic situations that end in humor and violence. During an early scene, for example, Soza treats a typical horror movie scene by going to great lengths to suggest that a man has committed suicide only to have her suddenly turn up safe and sound. Then, in the middle of the ensuing conversation, she calmly throws herself from

an open window.

Swing Girls certainly belongs to a bold new wave of Japanese horror. In it are elements of the master horror of Kurosawa and Kurosawa, the gut-wrenching violence of *Battle Royale* and the dark surrealism of *Onibaba*. At some point, it truly defies description, particularly when some of the cast breaks into a rock video (1). The main angle is maintained till the end and eventually yields some minor twists, but by that time *Swing Girls* may have lost you with its unending weirdness.

An unfortunate turn, and yet, we can't deny that the movie's horrifying images and distorted mysticism do linger, and linger exceptionally well. If Hollywood is looking to remake another Japanese horror, may we suggest *Swing Girls*, an exceptionally unique movie going to be rescued from what is essentially a mild case of oblivion.

Had Gadiel

PARTY OF ONE

REPP

Starring Sean Quinn, Jason Mewes and Majandra Delfino

Written and directed by Mark Anthony Galluzzo
Lions Gate Entertainment

Released on the festival circuit last year, *REPP* has to be one of the more confusing films I have seen in some time. Not because of any intricate or complex plot devices, but because I don't know why I found the damn thing so entertaining, given the fact that director Mark Anthony Galluzzo goes away the entire story within the first 10 minutes, five of the characters are likable, the dialogue is routine and — worst of all — the ending is a big letdown. Rapidly, I'll risk an on-looking at the next CrimeMachine by recommending this movie.

Given Quinn (*Dr. Giggles*, *Can't Buy Sex*) is Hal Evans, a gifted University student who, for whatever reason, never finishes anything in his life, then we quickly digress to romantic relationships. He is also very interested in murder and the fame gained by those who commit it. A big party is set to take place at Hal's apartment as he hosts of his best friend Ben, who is graduating university and taking his next step in life. However, before the guests arrive, Hal calls his friend out to get him drunk, bringing up the Hitchcock movie *Rope*, in which a man murders his friend, stuffs him in a



THAT CRAZY J-HORROR!

SUICIDE CIRCLE

(Starring Rye Ishibashi, Mutsaers Nagase and Tamas Belli)
Written and directed by Shun Sato
Denn Motion Pictures

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They say that every movie has a gimmick, and all it takes is for the inspiring filmmaker to find himself a really good one. It won't necessarily ensure success, but it'll sure make things a whole lot easier. The particular gimmick in this indie thriller is that, up and above, a single word throughout its first seventy-four minutes (well, okay, there are actually something like four words uttered, but I'll assume it for some things in the work).

Adaptively. Self For Sipping is peddled at feature-length, but director Pelly is ingenious enough to keep the story from ever slowing still. Viggo's reticence is key in keeping this a no-nonsense deal, but the script calls for the director to get creative when the police show up, and he does it to the max—intimately cutting in from unheard sources between conversations to develop the plot and revealing through answers what before is unobtainable.

Even so, the glennish jolt the best of him is the real, Petty tries to have things up with a sound-track and, boy, is it ever the wrong one. His *Self vs. Diggins* remains an original entry, however, and those of you who enjoyed *Devolve* if they want to take a chance with it, fear in mind I was shot like a flame, but the ideas and the talent are definitely there. Post-Copied Petty is certainly writing and directing. *Mince: Confess The Dimensions*.

1000



Staff For Mapping: An additional, original survey would cost very little more.

There are some interesting aspects to *ELFP*. Almost the entire movie is shot in the living room of Hal's apartment, the caroling scenes going from attractive couple to attractive couple, the audience listening in on a variety of superficial conversations.

FFP's biggest problem is that, after all the watching and waiting for film to dispatch his monetary goals, the whole thing is ruined by a theory ending that serves no other purpose than to give the subject a cheap laugh, draining the film of whatever impact it may have had. FFP does not come with glowing praise, but I will say thank it that time it is as intelligent, entertaining and – despite a Screenplay finale – a considerably above average indie feature film.

Abstract

HAPPINESS IS
THE ONLY WAY

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Michael Lipman and Clara Bellon
Directed by Rhode Montijo
Animation by Rhode Montijo
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Music by Micaela Mendez

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Originally conceived as content for a school program warning against cartoon violence, designer Rhodie Montgo and Kane Norriss took these damaged critters to the next level of depravity, then open global flames for evil that—the Internet: *The Happy Tree Friends* are a bloody mess online and attracted a fan base large and bloodthirsty enough to appreciate this DVD companion of all 14 brutally gory and equally hysterical episodes.

At roughly one and a half minutes in length, each short makes sure to end with valuable lessons for the kids like “Don’t breathe underwater,” but not before the same can is put through the blades of a helicopter rotor or some other hilariously horrible doom. Original Formula, the opening episode sets the standard with a dinosaur punning the crap out of baby animals with his tongue as they bubble around in a swamp. Leave the bar to stand unshakably

as *Sniffles* the aardvark gets the tongue-poking of a lifetime by a terrified family of cats (complete with fresh lemon juice for extra stinging power).

Any way you slice them, these happy-go-lucky creatures always turn out bright red and usually unrecognizable. That is good, wholesome cartoon road kill entertainment at its best! Extra features are packed with interactive mayhem and even some original sketches of unused characters like my personal fave, *The Road Warrior Tree Friend*. Stop by www.happytreefriends.com for more hot gun-a-Dyn! *BLOODBATH IS FETTER!*

Jon Yukerovic

FROM MACABRE WIELDING MONOCLOTH TO HARRY SUITED RETARD

DARKWOLF

Starring Samanie Armstrong, Ryan Norcia and Kane Hodder
Directed by Richard Friedman
Written by Geoffrey Holaday
20th Century Fox Home Video

There are lots of ways to screw up a werewolf movie — bad acting, an unimaginative script, cheesy effects, a mindless director that's a low budget? If nothing else, consider fan reaction to *Ginger Snaps* and *Dog Soldiers*.

There, both triumphs of style and substance over limited resources, put down that particular cheese.

So why is *Darkwolf* so uncharacteristically good-looking, elegantly, offensively bad? Name it on a lack, of heart. This cast of a horror show shamelessly rips off superior great films like *Prezident, The Howling* and even *The Formless* in its back-to-back, half-witted moments to the delight of its. As director Richard Friedman readily admits in the making-of featurette, *Darkwolf* was conceived by 20th Century Fox as a lycanthrope take on 2000's *Prezident*, itself a straight-to-video riff off the similarly pathetic *Amazons* (1997). So already you're working with third-rate, third-generation ideas. Throw in first-time screenwriter Geoffrey Holaday's admission that he doesn't understand why anyone would find werewolves scary and you're working from a pretty flawed premise.

The plot is equally backdated, pretty boy L.A.M.D. detective and werewolf hunter Steve Turley (Alonso) must protect confused waitress Jean (Armstrong) from the *Darkwolf*, a “hybrid” lycanthrope looking to mate with “mammalian purebloods” (hear in order to well, that's not made clear. Something about creating a race of super-wolves that threaten mankind, like like like. A screaming Tippi Hedren (*The Birds*) plays Mary, the attractive homeless woman who looks after Jean until she is cut down by the *Darkwolf* (played in his human form by erstwhile Jason Voorhees Kane Hodder).

Given current odds, *Darkwolf*'s ending points to its unshakable combo of sex and death. The film opens in a busy strip club and its highlight is an admittedly hot nude rooftop pas de deux (inspired by the *Neon-memoire-memo-Kane-Sara* werewolf text found at Mary's crime scene) which is juxtaposed visually with the mutilation of one of the pretty male leads. Throw in generous amounts of cheesy dialogue (“You're saying that there's something out there that wants to hook up with me?”), some half-baked werewolf mythology and a very unsexy *Darkwolf* costume (modified, we learn, from an apron) and what you're left with is a mission to pray for those pouting Ginger Snaps and Dog Soldiers experts.

Scott Phares



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THE LEAST FROM THE EAST

TSUI HAO'S VAMPIRE HUNTERS

Starring Kuo Cheng, Michael Gough

and Aya

Directed by William Dixie

Written by Tsui Hark

Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment

It's prolific Hong Kong producer and former John Woo associate Tsui Hark (a Chinese ghost story, *The Killer in the Garden*, resigned to giving kung-fu genre films a chance at wider ethnic success by releasing them, "Woo Cinema Presents" style with its own projected name attached to the title? Because its activity Tsui Hark's *Vampire Hunters* would garner much attention without the boost. It's an old-school Chinese zombie/vampire flick, complete with whatever clichés (only adequately dubbed into English, dodgy makeup effects, even dodgy CGI and weird characters. That said, it's mostly — but not completely — awful.

Set in rural 17th-century China, Austen follows banding monks Wai, Thun, and Hui and lightning as they head down and attempt to destroy the Vampire King, a creepy-freak, feasting bloodsucker who ticks their case during an initial confrontation that also leads to their Master Mao Shun's (a Chen Kun) disappearance. The quartet are led by their "vampire corpse" to the lair of zombie-worshiping Master Jiang (Fu Hong Kuang) who is preparing for his son's wedding to the beautiful Shiao played. Meanwhile for moments, the movie utilizes the incestual as an attempt to find the Vampire King.

Complicating matters is Tsui's psychotic brother Dragon (Monica Lee Mei Sheng), who is determined to discover the gold rumored to be hidden somewhere in Jiang's household, and Thun's budding love for the newly widowed Shiao (an awkward day of a make late on their wedding night).

But target also plot. Who isn't *Chowling Tiger* (Hien Dragon and Hui) is in danger of winning or losing what do audiences have to share? How about incoherent laughs. Is a post-Mao's world, the wire work and fight sequences are sloppily choreographed and badly edited, while the zombie makeup is only mildly horrifying. What is fun is the out-of-control adherence to knowingly arbitrary rules (eg. the Vampire King can't see you if you're wet) and the ultra-cheesy dialogue ("I see this, let's get married") for its with sufficiently low expectations and the pain of viewing will be tolerated.

Scott Plummer



while to get my head around the concept of the Tall Man playing a good guy, or that cast a preacher who grasps the value of his head when prayer pines. But in the presence of the movie. Then again, Screen once played Abraham Lincoln as well, and I've always thought he'd make a great *Sweeney*. *Appropriate for starting a prison?*

John W. Brown

SEASON'S GRIEVINGS

ONE HELL OF A CHRISTMAS

Starring Tony Montana, Thane Lindhardt and Erik Holmey

Written and directed by Shaky González

MTI Home Video

Expectations are tricky. For instance, I read a horror film, I expect scares. So I was not to pass *One Hell of a Christmas* based on it being a bad horror film. Except the production company's website describes it not as a horror film but as "a dark and witty-punked comedy." I see, so I'm the asshole here. Call it what you will. Action. Comedy. *Shit, One Hell of a Christmas is only unintentionally funny or dark, and so for action, well, Sorry. Sorry that's not it.*

And despite his best efforts, the only thing Tony Montana-like about star Tolo Montana is his name. He plays Carlton, an ex-con out on parole after two years in the state. All he wants to do now is stay out of trouble and spend Christmas with his young son. But his onscreen best friend and partner-in-crime Mike (Thane Lindhardt) threatens that plan. Mike has come into possession of a mysterious drug, one that dispenses a black powder which the pathetic punker needs to give himself superhuman strength. Mike offers to share the villain's power with the newly released Carlton but he needs for about 30 seconds. With both of them high on something other than life, it doesn't take long before Mike is disposing of the dead brother Carlton has killed.

Up to now, Christmas has been anything but merry. The story is what and screen/director Shaky González's (here-ten back any. The film's only energy shows up in the transmutation of the book- (you know it was coming) whose makeup and off-kilter movements up- all — as pay homage to the possessed kate in *The Evil Dead*. Tsui Hark's influence continues with low-to-the-ground POV shots, gonzo camerawork, and a hero wrapped by possessed things. (This leads to the film's one genuine laugh when Carlton brags his son's possessed man-size wolf-doll with a hat while yelling "I love me the show, you hairy bitch.") Call it what you will, *One Hell of a Christmas* is one hell of a piece of crap.

Scott Plummer



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REISSUES

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Murder by Decree: A heartbreaking Jack the Ripper movie

A CLASS ACT

MURDER BY DECREE (1971) DVD

Starring Christopher Pennamer, Julian Mason and Derek Sutherland
Directed by Bob Clark
Written by John Hopkins
Anchor Bay Entertainment

Is a heartwarming Jack the Ripper film possible? A modestly dignified production, 1971's *Murder by Decree* is less concerned with depicting The Ripper's carnage than creating sympathy for his victims. Christopher Pennamer stars as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's puffy amateur detective Sherlock Holmes, called upon by Whitechapel's cemetery to investigate the horrendous murders of local prostitutes. James Mason plays Dr. Watson, Holmes' loyal companion and foil, with subtlety, gone is the humility from previous Sherlock films. Together they uncover not only who the murderer is but, more

importantly, why he is. John Hopkins' script was inspired by John Lloyd and Elyon Jones' book *The Ripper File* and mixes much of the more conspiracy theory than Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell would years later in their graphic novel *From Hell*, hanging guilt on an already disgraced attempt by the Protestant-filled government to clean up after late apprentice Prince Edward's indiscretions, in this case a Catholic daughter (and potential heir to the Anglican throne) by cast London prostitute Annie Crook (Conservative legend).

Director Bob Clark may be best known for the teen sex comedy *Forrest* but he also made *Black Christmas*, which means he knows a thing or two about suspense. He establishes the murderer's brutality early on and sustains our interest through handsome production design (much of *Decree* was filmed on location in London) and first-rate performances (Clark gives all but credit-

it to his collaborators on his humble commentary track.)

The film's heart, though, is the playful relationship between Pennamer (as relations that I know only as Mason, Holmes and Watson complement, challenge and take care of one another, and their bromance exchanges constitute many of the film's highlights. When the Ripper is becomes almost unrecognizable, a through the discovery of the crime affords Pennamer some poignant moments in which to express Holmes' outrage, especially during the film's denouement when he confronts the man responsible for the deaths of so many. It's a powerful scene and makes *Murder by Decree* a worthwhile purchase for anyone who thought *From Hell* was the be-all and end-all of Ripper flicks.

—Sean Penner

THE DEFLOWERED SPRING

LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT (1972) DVD

Starring David Hess, Lucy Grantham and Sandra Cassel
Written and directed by Wes Craven
MGM Home Video

What can I say about *Last House on the Left* that hasn't already been said before? Since its release in 1972, Wes Craven's low-budget explosive re-chauvin of Ingmar Bergman's *The Virgin Spring* has been closely analyzed, discussed, debated, dismissed and celebrated a thousand times over. Forever a hot button in the horror world, *Last House* was single-handedly responsible for launching an entire sub-genre of rape revenge films, each one more unnecessary than the last.

No matter your personal opinion on the movie (and, as the notorious ad campaign stated ad infinitum, it is "only a movie, only a movie, only a movie"), *Last House on the Left* remains an important historical relic and is almost as shocking now as it was then. Surprisingly, mainstream video stores or MGM have not only re-released the film on DVD but fully restored the often butchered cde to exactly, lying on the extra and providing a long-overdue commentary track by Craven and producer Sam S. Canupham.

To the few not familiar with this notoriously nasty number, *Last House* details the brutalization, rape torture and eventual murder of two innocent teens at the hands of three semi-retarded thugs in the backwoods behind one of the girl's family homes. When the homicidal trio end up as house guests of said victim's parents, they're dispatched in an equally brutal manner by the outraged-crazed couple (see the infamous



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MGM restores *LIAR!* in all its gory glory

biograph/woman champ sequencer)

This is as rare, cheap and trendy as film gets, its inherentakeness offset by an equally uncomfortable hilarily folk score (by lead psychic David Hino, no less) and completely inappropriate branding. *Liars!* and *Hardy-boogie* comedy cop what? Wildly inconsistent, alternately shocking and stupid, by the time *Last Flower* grads to its predictably nihilistic conclusion, the viewer is disoriented, unsure of how to feel and in desperate need of a shower. It's a powerful and confusing cinematic experience.

MGM has rolled out the blood-soaked carpet for this controversial classic, restoring the print (which still pretty much looks like crap), offering both wide and full screen options, including the aforementioned, colorful *Cover/Convergence* commentary (did you know that Lucy Grantham's famous gunshot pain pining away was in fact real? Yummy!), providing dailies and outtakes and, most impressively, revealing forever unseen "forbidden footage", the contents of which are absolutely riveting, more

nap, more inhumanism, more backbit limbs, more screaming, more massive political incorrectness and featuring some truly unmissed minutes: flaming shots that will turn any nanny.

Last Flower on the Left is a landmark film, though not necessarily a "good" one. It belongs on every genre scholar's shelf, to be seen at least once and discussed forever. *Cover/Convergence*, who is a massively intelligent and sensitive man, asserts that he never watches the film but is nonetheless proud of its enduring ability to disturb. It is, without a doubt, the director's most brutal and gory cinematic venture, though I'm still unsure as to why *Rage* Hino calls it a "musicpiece" while simultaneously citing *How Zerk's* equally devastating *I Spit On Your Grave* as "the worst film ever made." Care to comment, chubbies?

Chris Alexander

THE DEVIL MADE HER DO IT

ALUCADA (1975) DVD

Starring Claudio Brook, Ten Romero

and Susana Kassinis

Directed by Juan Lopez Montemayor

Written by Alicia Arreaga

Musica: Manfreda Synapse

You don't need to be a fan of 1970s Mexican cinema or a follower of director Juan Lopez Montemayor (brother of *Monstruo de Medusa*, producer of *Indomitable* II *Rip*) to be bewitched by *Alucada*. Sure, if you're a convert who's been waiting this since of vintage *Salvador* critic's North American re-release on DVD, this high-quality, feature-length version will please you plenty. But if you're just looking for a blast of blood and nudity with a story that pays homage to *Stoker* and *de Sade*, this 1975 classic stands up to contemporary pictures and will not disappoint.

Alucada (Bewitch) is a bit like any 1970s moviehouse stuck in an all-gals' Cello:

school. You know the type. Dresses completely in black. Skips class. Teaches in English and knowing girls. Has organs in the forest and tries to rape her priest at confession. Okay, something might be a bit off with this girl. Could it be... Satan? Uh... yes.

But there's more than mere possession at work in this 1975 English language horror about teen "gritheads" gone bad in a convent. We can be pretty sure of that from the moment the innocent *Justina* (Kassinis) arrives and is greeted by nuns wrapped like mummies in bloodstained habits. *Justina* doesn't seem to notice, but then again, she's innocent. The new nuns thus act about freeloading in the woods, talking and giggling a lot. That in itself is reminiscent with a handsomely French gypsy (Claudio Brook of *Crossed*, who also plays the good doctor) that looks suspiciously like a priest opens the gates of hell and transforms *Alucada*'s macho-vicious tendencies into full-blown evil. From then on, it's just out-splitting shocking, thinking and more shocking. The 72-minute film isn't quite as elegant as the sounds, (although there are vague references to *Alucada* being Lucy Western's daughter that make no sense).

Monstruo deftly weaves witchcraft, devil worship, Catholicism and vampirism - revised the tale, backwards - in stylish scenes that offer subtle without overdoing story. The result is one creepy place with maximum opportunities for blood-soaked scenarios you'll want to watch over and over again. (Whether your blood thirst is flagellations, knives, amputations or being, it's all there in deep, vibrant reds. One particularly stunning scene gives new meaning to the term "Blood Bath.")

By no chance cinema, it's obvious *Alucada* directly influenced such well-known films as *Cover*, *The Exorcist* and *Freeway*. In addition to a good film, the *Monstruo* *Alucada* DVD comes with a satisfying amount of extra features. Short doc on Montemayor and Mexican '70s horror and an interview with *Alucada* director Guillermo del Toro are highlights. Apart from a few white scratches in the beginning,



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THE OTHER FIRESTARTER

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION (1992) DVD

Starring David Caruso, Melissa Miller and Cynthia Dale

Directed by Tobe Hooper
Written by Tobe Hooper
and Howard Goldberg
Anchor Bay Entertainment



It has been said enough times already that Tobe Hooper's career as a director is difficult to critique. The same goes responsible for at least one unrepentant horror classic (*Texas Chainsaw Massacre* being the most obvious choice, with *Polecat*, *Satan's Six* and *Chacona's* sequel winning varying degrees of critical accolade) but recently have responsible for delivering films ranging from well-loved (*Lifeline*) to pure garbage (*Shredder* from *Mars*, *The Molester*, *Condemned*). Piling closer to the latter category is 1992's *Spontaneous Combustion*, a not-so-dry Firestarter rip-off that with too many goofy performance and plot holes is plenty.

Somehow in 1950s Cold War America, a young couple has volunteered to take part in an experiment to test preventative measures against A-bomb victims. Located in a remote underground, the couple nurtures a special plant and even bears their first child. Everything is perfect — until both mother and father turn to dust in a freak occurrence of spontaneous combustion. But the infant survives and grows up as a possibly well-established Sam is subtly unloved Fred Clark's Flip, Canceled! (Caruso) whose only problem in life is he's a lost dog, chronic headaches, and a real bitch of an ex-wife. As Sam's rage grows, so do his powers to cause people to burst into flames, and it isn't long before he begins to unravel the truth of who he is and what he can do.

Spontaneous Combustion is one of those unintentional horror comedies — it really isn't funny, but the acting is so dumb silly you can't help but laugh. Of particular stupidity is Melissa Miller's attempt at a *Garrison* accent, which she seems to slip in and out of for half the movie. Not even genre veteran Caruso can save things, and even increases the unintentional factor by making all of his lines in a high-pitched yell. On a side note, the next year (Caruso would go on to star in a grand total of the horror films, including the nearly superior *Condemned*).

Caruso's popularity was still attracting considerable appeal within the genre, and Caruso's popularity at the time thanks to his obscure role in *The Last Dragon*. Anchor Bay has decided to give *Spontaneous Combustion* the bare bones treatment. Only a trailer is included, although the transfer is decent at 1.35:1, with crisp looking text and pronounced, especially in the blacks. Sorry fans, we know you're out there!

Aaron Lipson

the new trailer is clean and clear with great audio. Best of all, it's actually enjoyable to watch, not simply to say you've watched.

Lisa Lindeweer

VINTAGE VINCENT IN A BOX

AN EVENING WITH VINCENT PRICE AND GUESTS (THREE DVD COLLECTION)

Starring Vincent Price, Boris Karloff and Basil Rathbone
Falcon Picture Group

The movie has set a a daisy concept, useful more for shoppers than cineastes. Picture that: Austin Mel-dread wants you get something for Uncle Morty's birthday. When with how much confidence he pounds back, he might not be here next year and he did put you through college. Fine, but what do you know about him? Well, he always walks around quoting that saying "what you have to ask yourself is 'do I feel lucky?' well, do ya, punk?" speech from *Dirty Harry*. So you flick out for the 3-disc *Dirty Harry* series, except it turns out he only really likes *Dirty Harry* and *Mogambo*. Price, however, *The Explorer* and *Knights* *The Dead End* and *Sudden Impact*!

Price is, but gets even please all the people all the time, and Falcon Picture Group's *An Evening With Vincent Price And Friends* does not improve that notion. In three discs include an unimpaired classic (1964's *The Last Man On Earth*), a funny frighten (1975's *House on Haunted Hill*) and a decent movie-mystery (1979's *The Day*). Whatever appeal this package might have for Price fans is diluted by Falcon's inclusion of a third disc of various efforts from "Franklin" Boris Karloff (1940's *British Intelligence*) and Basil Rathbone (1941's *The Manly Story*).

As to the three Price releases, the somewhat crown jewel is the well-known edition of *Last Man*, director Sidney Salkow's adaptation of the Richard Matheson novella *I Am Legend* (see *REIGNING*). Price is Robert Morgan, the apparent sole survivor of an airborne contagion that has decimated the world's population and turned the recently dead into shambling vampire hulkers, who decimated Price in the previous year's *Nightmare*.



COLLECTIBLES REVIEWED ON PAGE 66.



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—H.P. Lovecraft

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DISTURBING OR GOOFY. WHAT MAKES THE BEST EROTIC HORROR? YOU DECIDE.

BY MONICA E. KUEHLER



MURDER'S KISS Seduction Obsession

There is only one thing worse than our pain and that's being pain. Mumma's Kiss was long winded, full of wannabe plot, and not even close to enough smutty action. If an episode of this is your thing, then by all means watch this. If you like what need more then locked and loaded up plot, be sure to bring a pillow.

In a nutshell, or over 90 minutes as it were, the gruesome mutilated remains of a voluptuous Egyptian are get resurrected by a countless Egyptian security guard trying to get a quick look-see. In one of the most disturbing scenes in this film we see the woman who would become Mumma's Kiss Step-Sue (Jude Victor) murdered and executed by having a mask complete with spikes that penetrate the eyes/brain forced down on her face (there must be really in his grave -G). Carcinomously her heart is also cut out.

These ancient Egyptians sure know how to party especially when some take breaded art seduction. Their leader's daughter, Lesson

learned in present day, the newly arisen mummy makes short work of the security guards and begins to amuse an army of soul-sucked humans with the pace of acquiring the living body she intends to put her long dead lover's soul into. Can anyone stop her? This is so drawn out the question should be, when is this going to end?

Despite all the gloom I think I only counted two naked onscreen organs during the entire film. As potentially scary G-movie fodder this had some profile, but in the end it didn't go there and neither should you.

BEAUTIFUL PREY Rite, Pagan Cinema

First things first, Beautiful Prey is a Japanese S&M film seamlessly packaged into the script of a thriller. Addicately it's a fun, true question: who is truly dominant, the sadist or the

masochist? It doesn't remain unanswered by much for turn-of-lark (at least not the turn of turn-of-lark) but it does make good fodder for plot twists, gore and general acts of depravity.

Beautiful Prey is the story of Yu, a sex-repressed masochist, and her sadist—boyfriend Hosono (Masaya Okano) who, after being released from jail (accusations: minor), comes back into her life with a knife, shattering sex and a rage. (It's a rape?)

Yu (Rie Manumura) finds herself in hospital and in the middle of a police investigation. The police, in turn, find themselves systematically seduced by Yu and hunted down like prey by their prey. Even female officer Hiroko (Makiko Watanabe) finds herself caught in the clutches of Hosono, spending several days being beaten, raped and starved. Only after she kills him in a fit of violent rage do we learn who was truly wearing the 7 heads of murder.

Beautiful Prey is disturbing and at times difficult to watch and that's exactly why I should be watching. Although the red packaging screams "ultimate erotic thriller" (it's

more like that and not really that at all). These are definitely some serious sexual elements here (some very nice bondage play, too), but these scenes are ultimately displaced by the violent imagery of rape and non-consensual S&M at the film's climax.

Beautiful Prey reminded me that some of the best depravity comes from within human beings. For those that don't, a whip the thin left ear being played and more than a little creeped out. Definitely worthwhile, even if you have to sleep alone with the doors locked afterwards.



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GOOTH WORKS IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS

MIDNIGHT MASS

Starring Pamela Garp, Douglas Gibson
and Morris W. Schramm

Directed by Terry Musiele

Written by Terry Musiele and F. Paul Wilson
Distributed: Lant Gato Entertainment

"It's impossible as it may seem, vampires are among us." So we are told at the start of this modern-day vampire flick. This, I can believe. The "vampire" genre has taken over the world! There has produced some great stories, including the 1986 novella *Midnight Mass*, by F. Paul Wilson (*The Day After Tomorrow*).

What's impossible to conceive, actually, is how Terry

Musiele — special effects expert turned filmmaker — has taken Wilson's thrilling tale and turned it into a pretty slick feature film. It starts out well enough — TV news clips report the spread of a global epidemic, which we soon learn is an virus, it's vampire! Get in a creepy afternoon in coastal New Jersey, where a young-faced blood-drinking townie is trying for a villain moment as abandoned boardwalk, in broad daylight? Turns out these black and white

vampire exterminators — called Vicks — who work the city shift for their nocturnal murders. Gentle. Who better to serve as human slaves to a vampire-ruled universe than gels?

The leader of this party is a vice with a fake English accent named Simon (that, I can believe). The Vicks fail to capture innocent young Gwen (Garp), who follows them back to their B.O., the town church. She escapes to peek at their party (which looks a lot like a prepubescent kid's sleep) but ends up entangled in talks to Father Joe (Gibson), a drinking/drinking priest who once presided over the church. She wants him to sacrifice for the nation.

Unfortunately, *Midnight Mass* just isn't spooky or suspenseful. Without any plot twists, action scenes or real character development, you're left waiting for the first life fight between Joe and his vampire nemesis, Father Patrick (Schwarz). This gives you a lot of time to notice the low-budget production values — the bad lighting and cheesy music. Apart from Father Joe, the vampires in *Midnight Mass* are all anonymous stock bodies, as befits a film from the human perspective.

Midnight Mass brings its talents to their gang, ghost-like drags with zombie-like costumes that are scary and monstrous. It's too bad to watch their rubber faces melt, so it's too bad there aren't more of them. *Midnight Mass* is Musiele's directorial debut, and while he has a few good ideas, they don't add up to two hours of fun or fright.

Lisa Lubliner

QOD HAS FANGS

THE DEATHMACHINE (1972) QOD

Starring Robert Quarry,
John Farrow and Bob Fickett

Directed by Ray Dennis

Written by R.L. Gray
Distributed:

Look up, look away up and tell me what you see. If you said Robert Quarry — along along along — you are correct. QOD! ROBERT QUARRY IS GOOD. ALL HAIL QOD! QUARRY! Then, now that I've gotten that out of my overly excited system it's time to direct one of Coast Quarry's most known flicks, the vampire/horror/fantasy way open

The Deathmachine. A former B.M. creature features film that has never been available on home video in any format, until now.

Thanks to exploitation con Fred Johanson, Hollywood Chairman Michael Olesky's long-time partner, the Deathmachine is finally getting its delayed due in a super-deluxe special edition DVD featuring "hidden" commentary by the actually Ray and the remarkably short, genre-savvy Quarry — 37 years young and still packed full of plot and energy.

In the wake of the massive and unknown success of AP's *Count Dracula* (1970), James Nicholson and Sam Tuller were going big on their big new horror epic, a middle-aged genre icon along the lines of Vincent Price. Quarry followed up that overused celebrity status by immediate producing and starring in *The Deathmachine*, an attempt to combine "top-flight" through-the-roof box office take with the best basic headline attraction of better Shuler SeCal old guy Chucky Marron.

The film details the lives and loves of a few and every gang of "peach hair", "sawtooth hair", "hooker pipe hooker" hippies. One night during a violent thunderstorm a gambled, body-haired, zombie-wearing duke appears in their living room, claiming to know all the answers. That the hippy hippies are looking for. He becomes their guru, changing their diet and preaching new ways of purification through religion and meditation. Eventually, he spreads fangs and turns them all into bloodsucking vampires. How cool is that?

When Tuller got wind that Quarry just was still under a six picture contract was doing his own ups on the "top" franchise, he took his top and tried to have the picture shut down. Eventually AP bought the film and — presumably out of desperation — stamped it without further on the olive-oil cloth before it faded into the crawling sunset. *Quarry* really became *The Deathmachine* in a much more effective place of "70s vampire cinema than *Dracula* or its spunky sequel. It's a happy, strange and surreal film — infused and more-spoiled with humor and comic direction by twice back the Season (Ray Harris Quarry





of the lampoon. The sun-baked California beach photography (by Jean' Gill Butler) is striking and, perhaps subtlest of all, the lovely young hippie/junk dealer/should-be-vampire killer is played by the guy who supplied the voice for Disney's Piglet.

Of course, the main reason to watch *The Deathmaster* is for the brilliant title performance by the ever intense, Swedish actor Quincy (himself). This guy manages to draw both cast and scenery with stunningly bloody intensity.

I love this movie. It's quite a rare. I have watched it three times since I picked it up, and plan to watch it at least three more. *Reunited* is to be commended for this delicious edition. The music rock, the commentary tracks, the trailers... um, hell? And there's even a funny old Lucky 320z commercial with Quincy smoking his ass off. As they say up north, don't waste!

Chris Alexander

LADIES OF THE NIGHT REUNITED!

VAMPIRES (1974) DVD

Starring Marianne Morris, Anita

Directed by Jose Ramon Larraz

Written by D. Deatonny and Jose Ramon Larraz
Also Underrated!

Jose Ramon Larraz's second-reunion movie

gripped. *Vampires* is simply the most sensually sexual Gothic film of the 1970s. Its vulgar imperfections only adding to the air of class and dirty carnal passion. Marianne Morris and Scandinavian model Anita star as Free and Miriam, two gorgeous bloodsucking beauties who prey the English countryside, hitching rides with shifty first-class looking for a bit of backwoods action. They bring the classical scale light to their sex, an impressively baroque, shimmering English manor, where the two women proceed to figure up, seduce and strap their johns in the point of combustion (Larraz's) sedicy laid the tide in the cellar whilst watching. These camp scenes are a director's eye view away from hardcore.

There white-hot, like postcard-like beauty is an intense that men orgasm will not suffice. Using dagger, claw and teeth just a long in sight, the girls go into hormonal overdrive, making blood-spattered misadventure of their victims, hungrily lapping the juice from both open wounds and each others' nether holes.

These legendary after-granorous blood-suck master vampires use the one-two sucker punch in what is an otherwise masculine, slow burning flick. Most of the 88-minute running time is spent on a somewhat tedious awkward couple who are conversing on the vampires properly and a dopey, half-dressed dude (Morris)

Brown, leader in Don Carlos Stracale who has apparently fallen in love (or at least lust) with Morris and refuses to leave the house. In any other movie, these subplots would be the kiss of

death... not so here. Spanish exploitation director Larraz shoots the whole sex obsessed, misdirected epic as if it were a sort of hard-core dream and, indeed, as the continuous look-alike ending suggests, it may very well be.

As is typical of '70s European erotic horror, much of the graphic sex and violence was ruthlessly removed from domestic theatrical prints. Anchor Bay released a gorgeous, personally owned edition a few years back and now Blue Underground has done them one better, adding more gore, longer lesbian shower scenes and bringing in a whole (parody the post) of extras, including director's commentary and candid, revealing interviews with both Anita and Morris. For all you kinkback into wondering how the two pre-dragging gorgeous young actresses would look 30 years later, you'll be pleasantly stunned to learn that both women have aged like the fine Corporation wine that their characters wall right before the kill. Low budget and narrative incoherence aside, *Vampires* remains a real shocker, somewhat flawed, incredibly sexy look-alike in horror history and a highly recommended DVD.

Chris Alexander

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March on Howland Hill (One of a lot of vintage scenes in a new Vincent Price box set.

Halloweenology Twice Their Dads, made the most of his pitiful AIP budget by filming in Italy and relying on Price to fill the screen. That he does admirably, according to Morgan all the paths and locations one would expect from a man who watched his family die and spends his days destroying the vampires who attack him nightly. As Morgan says poignantly, he loves "a beautiful away from hell."

Also worth checking out for curiosity's sake is William Castle's *Jacobson* (but *Sam Mouse on Howland Hill*, remake rather humorlessly in '99 by another William). *Four Out Corn* director Malone Price plays Frederick Lorenz, an eccentric millionaire who invites five strangers to the wicker haunted house on the premise that they'll each receive \$10,000 (it was a noble sum back then) if they spend the night—and survive. Lorenz is acid-tongued exchanges with his conviving wife, *Amabelle* (Carol Ghossein) are the scariest part of this ghoulishy spookhouse, which started its notoriety from Castle's gag of having a glow-in-

the-dark skeleton (named *Emergo*) wending out over audience.

Widest of the branch is *The Bat*, a thriller sadly devoid of thrills. Already filmed twice before (as *The Bat* in 1926 and *The Bat Whispers* in 1930), and based on Avery Corman and Mary Rinehart's smash stage play (4 run, 875 performances in New York alone), this ensemble effort is perhaps most notable for introducing the pulp concept of the unseen killer's black-gloved hands reaching out for his victim. Price's role as the groovy Dr. Wells is underdeveloped and sympathetic, although his conspiracy with frequent co-star Agnes Moorhead is playful. But Price is understated and the film comes off as starchy.

The Ratloff and Rathbone vehicles are non-horror so I've left off reviewing them here. Price fans truly interested in seeing this "terrific" duo together are advised to seek out 1944's *The Comedy of Errors* and 1939's *Review of London* (The three become friends on the London set when Ratloff and Rathbone dined the 27-year-old Price in a vat

filled with Coca bottles and cigarette butts.) A truly odd collection, *An Evening With* may be good enough for Uncle Mitty but I don't know who else.

Sean Plantmore

TIP TOE THROUGH THE INNARDS

BLOOD HARVEST (1957) DVD

Starring Tiny Tim, Frank Benson

and Peter Krause

Directed by Bill Robson

Written by Ben Benson, Cyril Joseph

and Bill Robson

Reunited

This completely bizarre film was originally released straight to video under the miles Nightmare and *The Macabrous Memo*, and thanks to cult cinema machine Reunited, we can now enjoy it in discomfort to our own living rooms. *Blood Harvest* is nothing less than a nonsensical, creepy yet creepy smelter full of gruesome gore and perpetual nudity, a film that can only be enjoyed for its sheer perversity.

Upon arriving from university to her quaint Midwestern farm home, Jill Robertone quickly learns that all is not well in her humble abode. The local banks are foreclosing the farms and Jill's father, a banker, has become a target of hate amongst his town-folk, who vandalize his house. Worse still, Mr. and Mrs. Robertone are nowhere to be found, leaving Jill with only the neighborhood for company as an orphaned and her creepy eleven-year-old wearing brother. Interview (played by '80s singer Tiny Tim, best known for an early rendition of "Tiptoe Through the Tulips"). Jill's new fiancé who occasionally drops by for a round of the old m-and-o, then there's the masked killer who dispatches all those who get too close to Jill, hanging their lifeless bodies to drain in the barn.

Blood Harvest makes very little sense in that the beginning, middle and end seem to



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FULCI VIOLENTA

CONTRABAND (1980) VHS

Starring Fabio Testi, Ivano Mastri and Guido Alberti
Directed by Lucio Fulci
Written by Gianni De Crescenzo, Lucio Fulci,
Giorgio Monicelli, Ettore Sottos
Blue Underground



The years 1979-82 are considered Fulci's golden era. The eight films he made in this time again cut his most popular and enduring. Of the eight, one film is unique in the position of his extensive filmography, for several reasons. *Contraband* (Lucio, *Il contrabbando*) is the only non-horror film made in this period—it has a conventional narrative, it is the only film set in Italy and it is the only film to feature an exclusively Italian cast. It is also the best to be well represented on DVD. Fabio Testi (after *Love for Sale* in *Solange?*, see *WHORE* above) as Luca Di Angelo, the leader of the blue boats, a small flotilla of speedboats used to smuggle cigarettes into the city of Naples. Francesco Jacca (the Manigaglia), wants the blue boats to smuggle his drugs into Italy and knows exactly on Luca and his family. The local cop who helped Luca to keep out the Interpol and his drugs and an all-out Mafia war erupts, marked by arson, execution, kidnapping, betrayal and vendetta.

Of *The Beyond* (Cradle, 1981), Fulci's undisputed masterpiece, he said that he had made "a film without borders." Of *Contraband*, it can be said that Fulci made a film without conscience. The dramatic action that came to light in the chain-smoking scene in his giallo *Don't Bore a Duckling* (film or article on paper, 1972) and the protected splatter-is-the-eye sequence in his previous film *Condemned* (1976), comes to the fore in *Contraband*.

The Manigaglia cuts a swath through Luca's allies by gunning them down in a close-up, slow-motion bullet ballet. Luca, the hero, is not adverse to kicking one of the Manigaglia's henchmen by shoving him in the chest and holding the blade until he gets the information he wants. Luca's wife (Mastri) is beaten and raped while Luca looks over the rooftops. The subplot plot the Manigaglia derives from a *Dances with Wolves* moment on the face of a pretty German woman is a drag that goes over in perhaps the height of cruelty in Fulci's filmography. The music during this scene, courtesy of Fabio Frizzi, would be more at home in a porno. Even a quiet moment with Luca's young son riding in one of his Uncle Mickey's businesses racing cartages is infused with a disturbing undercurrent of pedophilia. Fulci's trademark splatter is all over the climactic gun battle, in which Fulci makes an unusual cameo as a witness dispensing machine-gun justice on the Manigaglia's men.

Contraband is Fulci's most straightforward and colored film from this period. Sergio Sobott, who learned his most highly regarded films, is almost pedestrian in his approach, the only scene depicting his visual flair is an overhead shot of a Manigaglia henchman falling into a pit of bubbling sulfur. Luca later throws his dedicated corpse through the bathroom window of a red motel in another effective scene.

With the exception of a couple of scenes of past damage at the end of the second to last reel, Blue Underground presents an excellent print of this movie in the original 1.85:1 theatrical aspect ratio. The DVD shows the old and rather rare Mogul VHS release out of the Naples harbor. The only extra are the theatrical trailer and commentary that box of Testi and Fulci. *Contraband* is a first-rate example of the global Italian crime genre and a solid addition to any Fulci fan's collection.

The Gore-mat

have been dreamed up by three separate people who never spoke to one another before shooting began. However, the film earns its accuracy from the one-of-a-kind performance by Testi, who plays a sometimes pitiful, sometimes macabre, sometimes menacing, but very creepy and disconcerted clown, who somehow holds the secrets to what the back is really going on in this film.

Betwixt has done a commendable job putting this on DVD and, despite being shot on 16mm with that poverty-stricken production the film looks decent and is of consistent quality. Also included is a still gallery and The Tiny Tim Saltschew, a look behind the scenes with the killer knives, including an interview with Tim, excerpts from his proposed children's TV series, and no scenes are with director Bill Rebane (*Measure a Go Go*, *Invaders From Mars*).

Blood Harvest is a film that was understandably lost in the world of cheap, lowest common denominator direct-to-video horror. But thanks to some effectively brutal murder sequences, the backwoods setting, and the ever creepy Tiny Tim, the movie just manages to work... almost.

Aaron Lipman

EURO GOOFBALLS

CONTRABAND (1980) VHS

Starring Ian McCulloch,
Louise Marano
and Martin Mann
Directed by Luigi Cozzi
Written by Luigi Cozzi
and Erick Flores
Blue Underground



Holy mackerel mother of gods, I can't seem to say "spunk" says a "dick biter" after spunk spunk once Lewis Cosgrove's wacky '80s alien rip-off *Zenc Spunk!* Or was it *Alien Condemnation*? Or not it... wait a minute, *Zenc Spunk*, *Alien Condemnation*, *Lamia Cozzini*. Hey, I've seen this bloody movie before! *Twice!*

Yes friends, *Condemnation* is the most go-freak! Euro go-freak! that once haunted the shelves of my by night video superstore under the aforementioned alias. This badly dubbed handkerchief of a flick has been fully



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Underground for a deluxe DVD release, original title card and finally being director Lewis Carter made his true mark, Leap Comm. Bravo Reissues!

Compassionate tells the reader tale of a one-eyed rubber alien's quest to rule the earth by having humans to eat around New York planting little acid-packed eggs under radars. When the pulsating overheard ones (which look like green breast implants) erupt, they spray torrents of spores that cause people into gory human pelvises.

A cop, a wacky astronaut and a humorless FBI agent team up to bring down the beast. Finally covering the eyelids is a Colombian coffee plantation. If all this sounds patently ridiculous, it is, but in a good way. Compassionate rocks hard on so many levels that it transcends its inherent irony, becoming a sort of wild, breathlessly-paced cross between a Roger Moore Bond flick and Ridley Scott's misadventure of galactic doom with a little pitiless purple anxiety sickness thrown in for good measure. And hey, *Reissues*! Not matter how far McCulloch, he of *Smoker* and *Dr. Pankov* fame, is in it too. I mean to God that guy would've shown up at the opening of an envelope if it meant paying the rent for his

future villa.

I'm making a bit of fun of the film, to be sure, but as much *Compassionate* really is a great little late-1960s B-movie that has cemented a pretty solid cult following since its release in 1969.

Coxon has worked to second act in *Aggression* and, while no maestro himself, he's an efficient director, giving his greenies over a playfulness rarely seen in Mad Maxes. Horror lives when hapless victims are caught into stone carvings of blood and guts, there's a goody for *Johnnie Dollar* after who to the action. Coxon himself has voiced surprise at the film's enduring R rating. There's gore galore but the carnage is cartoonish, not gory.

The best thing about *Compassionate*, and one of the primary reasons the movie remains so popular, is the towering, super cool score by prog rockers right up there with the band's best work and as rousing enough to look out the bones on this handsome digital edition. DVD extras include a documentary called *The Alan Aronson On Earth* (the film's working title), a rally rail gallery and a trailer. An egg-collared monster-plot webseries trailer displays all the making flesh and overage coffee beans, and a powerful 6.1 DTS-ES surround mix captures the sound of squish. Push it up back in a capsule!

Chris Alexander

LOW, BUT NOT LOW ENOUGH

RAULERS (1976) DVD

Starring Sam Chew, Elizabeth Chavet and Ben Frost

Directed by John McCuskey

Written by Jerry Gidding and John McCuskey
Something Wild Video

Shake, rattle and roll... a score track right over the half-camped turkey from America's

acknowledged Harry North. *Raulers* is yet another of the decade's narrative nature run amok epics, sorts like *Kingdom of the Spiders* without Bill Shatner or *Spiders* or an owner of wit, tension, budget or filmmaking talent of any kind. But not, North!

What kind of battered brains decide to make a film about borders of mutant snakes chopping their way through a sleepy second desert, then doesn't even bother to illustrate the attack? My guess is the writer/director/producer John McCuskey had an absurd vision who weighed action or something and decided to make a movie about the slaughter/assaultation. Bottom line: the movie rocks twice.

A dumb-as professor of wit, make-look, yeah, that's it if played by human free truck Sam Chew (hope at the chance to earn \$250 [body 1975 economy, Bummer!]) by investigating an unsplashed series of victims (or so we're told) rattlesnake attacks perpetrated by the under wriggler. He looks up with a flummoxed photographer (Chavet) who lays some unsplashed mid-fingerie distillate on him, before riding his box in a pop test.

Meanwhile, snakes kill pop cleaning pollution, bite army pop lines and most hilariously, someone asked bathing sticks (early on, it's only PG) by popping through faecal! None of this cheap mayhem is nearly as fun as it sounds. In fact, slow death by cobra bite is a preferable way to kill 90 minutes.

Something, Ward (one more birds the slight mass attraction with a trackload of similarly-themed grandiose goodness including one of Ben Kerkoff's final Mexican lizard snakes, *The Snake People*), but even these are pretty tired. There's so much gross exploitation junk out there, and life is too short for this kind of half-ass mockery. Watch Jennifer Lopez get her full ass eaten by an *Ascarido* instead.

Chris Alexander



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It's ready to be scored straight (because there could be your rock on it!) or just pain scored away from your DVD player when you are subjected to the ups and downs of teenage angst that comes with having a 14-year-old teenage girl daughter and a 16-year-old pre-guzzing son-in-law. And if you think that's just junk, then you are a teen online. www.teenonline.net

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1. **What is the purpose of the study?** The purpose of the study is to determine the effect of a new drug on the treatment of a specific condition.

2. **What are the research objectives?** The research objectives are to compare the efficacy and safety of the new drug with the standard treatment.

3. **What is the study design?** The study design is a randomized, double-blind, controlled trial.

4. **What are the study participants?** The study participants are patients who have been diagnosed with the condition and are eligible for the study.

5. **What are the study interventions?** The study interventions are the new drug and the standard treatment.

6. **What are the study outcomes?** The study outcomes are the efficacy and safety of the new drug compared to the standard treatment.

7. **What are the study results?** The study results show that the new drug is more effective and safer than the standard treatment.

8. **What are the study conclusions?** The study conclusions are that the new drug is a promising treatment for the condition.

9. **What are the study limitations?** The study limitations are the small sample size and the short duration of the study.

10. **What are the study recommendations?** The study recommendations are that the new drug should be further studied in a larger, longer-term trial.

Signal about other manufacturers' app CDS entries is that not one of them includes information about the cost and cover of the app or is looking at the safety implications of a, in the long run, app-based, but you wouldn't know for purposes and consequences of what is the good. The best and the app of critical services, that I see in the app, that is, the original company, aren't really supported by the same effort for you, because you don't have a CDS, and

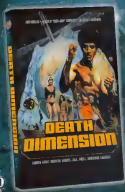
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The Fearless Monster: A shock from the east.

STEEL GOOD

THE FEARLESS MONSTER (1965) DVD

Starring Barbara Steele and Paul Miller

Directed by Mario Caiano

Written by Mario Caiano and Fabio De Agostini
Rereleased

You take your chances walking into the *Joe Morgan* office late in the segment's cycle looking for movies to review. Sifting through the racks nobody wanted to stick to trolling through the recycling trying to find that recipe that lined the garbage can last week. In both cases, you're up to come up with something snaky.

So it was a real treat finding *The Fearless Monster*. Look past the garish cover art and you will discover a classy gothic thriller that deserves to take its place alongside *Black Sunday* and *Castle of Blood* in the hallowed pantheon of screens upon Barbara

Steele's filmography.

Steele stars as the reeve-haired Marcel, the unhappy wife of Dr. Stephen Arrowood (Miller). The set is good doctor takes a business trip to uncover his wife's affair with the unhelmsed (R&R: Hestagles). Arrowood is asked to do by his loyal undersecret, the elderly Solange (Linn). He finds the leaves in the garden, captures them, and in a graph-

ically sadistic manner (re)hauling early '70s giallo, tortures them to death.

But Arrowood's crimes are not entirely those of passion. We learn that he was in league with Solange now curiously young, to get rid of his wife and inherit her family fortune. But the brilliant Marcel, wife of her husband's "dirty experiments," changed her will, bequeathing everything to her allegedly mad stepson Jerry (Steele again as a blonde). So there is only one thing for Arrowood to do: he must rescue Jerry from the asylum and make her his bride.

Steele is magnificent in her dual role of Marcel and Jerry. In great and seductive as Marcel, she subtly modulates her performance as the event but confound Jerry, who feels that something is not quite right in her new home. Director Mario Caiano exhibits a new hand, creating a stylish thriller that favorably recalls Mario Bava's best work while evoking some original and surreal imagery of his own. Ennio Morricone's organ-heavy score complements the eerie atmosphere. Rereleased's "uncut letterboxed Euro edition" looks clean and includes a Steele photo gallery.

Sara Plesner

THREE MOVIES IN ONE

ODYSSEY TO THE PLANET OF PREHISTORIC WOMEN (1961) DVD

Starring Marie Van Dorn and Mary May

Directed by P. Bogdanovich & P. Kuchnerov

Written by Henry Jay

Rereleased

Want to see something really strange?

After purchasing the Russian scores (fiction film *Plasma Jurg*, which is apparently an accomplished screen picture) found con-

stant cheap-on Roger Corman, would use the footage in a number of films, including *Odyssey to the Prehistoric Planet*, *Queen of Blood*, and this one, *Odyssey to the Planet of Prehistoric Women*. Peter Bogdanovich, a more accomplished director these days, filmed a few scenes of beautiful Marie Van Dorn (*King of the Night Monsters*) on the beach with several blonde look-alikes, and then added these to *Plasma Jurg*, directed by Kuchnerov, before his credit here.

The result is a difficult to follow tale about a Russian (team of cosmonauts) voyage to Venus, where they attempt to rescue another team that had visited the planet earlier. Once there, they are attacked by some very funny looking lizard men. We then cut to Bogdanovich's bleach blond aqueduct, who we are supposed to believe are hunting the cosmonauts from a distance with their telepathic powers. And then the movie ends. And then we go check out the extras.

It should be noted as my purpose that the great used for this "new digital letterboxed master" is worn to hell, and looks pretty much like what we would expect a VHS copy of this artifact to look like. The key scene here is a lengthy interview with Van Dorn, who recounts her life as a 18-month basketball, including her travels in Vietnam where she discovered as a turning point in her life. Also included is a Russian phone novel, which is not used as so to be available, and a nice photo gallery.

But what can really be said about a movie like *Odyssey to the Planet of Prehistoric Women*? Obviously it has little merit as a serious film, but criticizing it as pretty much any level would make us the dumb ones, wouldn't it? Seriously, this is hardly even a movie. So back, use your hallucinogenic of cheer, and save into the psychobabble wilderness in the comfort of a drug-addled brain.

Aaron Lipson



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1997's masterful piece of minimalist low-budget terror gets reinvented just in time to coincide with a belated sequel. Guess which one's better?

THE MATHEMATICS OF FEAR

CLEVER KILLER

CUBE (1996) SIGMAHOUSE SERIES DVD

Starring Nicole de Caen and David Hewlett

Directed by Vincenzo Natali

Written by A. Ristic, V. Natali and G. Monaghan
Lions Gate Entertainment

Before the Wachowskis asked "What Is The Matrix?" Vincenzo Natali asked "What Is The Cube?" Both questions — both answers — are mere frameworks upon which to explore larger philosophical issues. In *The Matrix*, man's relationship to technology and reality itself; in *Cube*, his nature and how far he will go to survive.

The film has been much discussed, not — for

newcomers — here is a fatal plot synopsis: a small group of people find themselves imprisoned in a cubic structure with no memory of how they got there. Each has a talent or glint of knowledge which, in combination, may lead them to its way out, but body-trapped cuber (nearly) cost members are harried to death and effort to pieces, fear and paranoia erode their survival instincts.

Canadian director Natali's first film has acquired something of a cult following since its release six years ago, enough to warrant a straight-to-video sequel. Seeing the *is-is* possibilities, the distributor, Lions Gate, which also produced the original, has released this *Sigthouse* Series version of the original.

First released to DVD in 1999, this *Cube* is distinguished by a new director (concentrating Natali proves himself an elegant and understated) speaker (he discusses the physical challenges involved with making such a conceptually ambitious piece on a budget of just \$250,000 (wow), as well as the development

difficulties in both the script and timing stages. Perhaps most interesting is the director's defense of the *Cube* itself as an instantly far-killing machine, one whose implacability reveals the true nature of each character.

Intrusive info aside, *Cube* is ultimately a character study: its twisted happenings may suggest science fiction or horror, but its heart is borrowed from such fare as Hitchcock's *Lighthouse* (that a claustrophobic set piece where the dire situation peels away its protagonists' outward appearances layer by layer until their true nature are revealed).

Steve Penner

TOO SQUARE

CUBE 2: HYPERCUBE

Starring Kari Matchett and Neil Cross

(Directed by Arkane) Setback

Written by Sean Hood

Lions Gate Entertainment

If the terrible title of this follow-up to the low-budget cult hit *Cube* (1997) doesn't make you groan in agony, some of the SF staples contained within might. Although masterfully shot by Arkane Soule, cinematographer on films such as *Reservoir Dogs*, *Play Station* and *American Psycho*, *Cube 2* fails to deliver the same hit (or in its predecessor, it is not surprising then that the original writers had nothing to do with the

possible hybridization of what was a genuinely good idea, rife with subtextual and possibly to its credit though, hypercube is not simply a rehash of the original as that it aims to kick the story up a notch by literally thinking outside the box.

Cube 2 starts off with a *deja-vu* as a group of one-dimensional characters (some of which are as combined I want to throw up my hands) awake to find themselves trapped in the square of a seemingly infinite puzzle of cube-shaped rooms. This time however, it is a new cube with new challenges. And the characters were not just randomly selected to solve it. The premise is based on the concept of a tesseract: a mathematical way of explaining the fourth dimension — a 4-D cube. This added relative to the cube means that the laws of physics no longer apply as the characters seek liberation from its complex geometry. There are parallel dimensions and two states with many possible outcomes inside, which ultimately leave you unsettled as to the characters because they can die many times. Unfortunately, there are also considerably fewer body traps leaving people unscathed, and the ones it does have are computer generated and not frightening.

What made the original film an intriguing was its preoccupation with philosophy, which was punctuated by an enigmatic ending that left you guessing what fate happened to the outside world, or if there even is one at all. Overall it's a decent effort with some interesting ideas and effects work, but it fails to measure up to the original's intrinsic quality. One thing's for sure though, *Cube 2* is not four-dimensional as the Hypercube.

The Blue Mongoose



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HAPPY TRAILERS TO YOU

ALL MONSTERS ATTACK! DVD

Various Directors
Midge Entertainment

Here's something I never get enough of: Despite the fact that it's been done many times before. And no, I'm not referring to creepers in abandoned outfits, although there certainly is a great deal to be said for them. Nope, I'm talking insider compilations here, a novel format vid concept whose very existence speaks volumes about the sturdy popularity of cult film fans. I mean who else would pay money to sit through over an hour's worth of previews?

For well over a decade something Weird Video of Seattle has ruled the official indie cinematic breakfast repulse channel out vibrant after conservatively campy volumes of underdogs as well as collections of protosex's nuclear safety, Christian covert and antisocial and drag shorts and

more than other works. I hope they never drop Midgeville. Virginia-based Midge Entertainment, a relatively new outfit whose motto is "Movies That Fell Through the Cracks!" has seductively waded into the fray with *All Monsters Attack!*, one of the freest and most comprehensive collections to date released in recent years.

Featuring some very theatrical trailers, the lady's dressed almost exclusively to point monster flake (beginning with King Kong) dating from the forties through the eighties, plus a small handful of

shorts that don't quite fit the bill but are still excellent for sheer silliness.

The early Godzilla canon is well represented, along with many of the American giant bug movies of the fifties, including personal faves like *Them!* and *Godzilla: King of the Monsters* in *Attack of the Mantis*. In case you thought *Godzilla* was the only dino-mania from that period (as I must admit I did).

And then there are the aforementioned odd-man knowledge funny and largely unrecognizable but like the infamous *Robot Monster* it *Conquered the World*. *The Killer Shrews* (big dogs in space!) and *Night of the Living Shreds* (the one about giant killer rabbits, starring Janet Leigh). The rapid bombardment has an effect like time-lapse photography allowing us to observe decades of horror trends and archetypes constantly evolving, influencing each other and in some cases blowing each other out of the water.

Also included are documentaries on the making of *The Jewish People of Sodom* and *The Land They Never Forget* the animated Kafka/Godzilla parody *Myconophoria* plus *Operation Plumbline* a rather dull 1954 nuclear safety short (sorry no duck-and-cover stuff here). Of course, *All Monsters Attack!* makes for great party visuals correspond with the usual sound down and The Mantis or *Armageddon* on the box. (Drugs and popcorn not included.)

John W. Brown

VINTAGE SHADOWS ON A BUDGET

BLIND MEN WALK (1946) DVD

Starring George Zucco and Dwight Frye
Directed by Sam Newland
Written by Fred Myton
Alpha Video

PAC (Infectiously known around here as Poverty Row) Classics' third volume director

actor George Zucco (*Blackboard of Doom*, *The Magnificent Ambersons*) and the immortal Dwight Frye, making appearances roll on the classic *Blind Men Walk* every Friday and

Saturday. *Blind Men Walk* is a *Changeling of the Night* can still be enjoyed today as a classic. Gothic horror film has absolutely no other strengths are the clichés and conventions that it follows.

Zucco plays the dual role of Dr. Lloyd Clayton (the good doctor who has been) and his evil twin brother Elysia is discover who has come. Clayton kills his brother in an act of self defense but, using the powers of black magic, Elysia returns to exact his revenge in a manner targeting their names to the bone. This of course creates confusion among the local townsfolk who think Elysia is the truly dead, mistakes Clayton as the one trying to kill his own name. Simultaneous to Dracula are obvious with Clayton serving as a Van Helsing-type character. Elysia is the typical blood sucker, and Frye as Randolph in the form of yet another headbashed servant.

For fans of classic horror who can't get enough of the long shadows and Gothic horror imagery that Tim Burton likes to recreate, *Blind Men Walk* delivers there is not particularly effective scene in a cemetery at the beginning of the picture. As a movie that's fun to watch however, well - isn't just any it is. No doubt about it, the value here is really the value only as an artifact of early low-budget horror.

Kevin Lupton

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IN THIS ISSUE!

**CEREBRAL MACABRE:
A CAL McDONALD MYSTERY**

by Steve Niles and Ben Templesmith (Dark Horse)

CEL COME SCENE INVESTIGATION #4

by Collins and Rodriguez (CBI)

BOODS + NILES #9

by Niles and Carter (Dark Horse)

ROUTE 666

WITCHER TO WITCHER, TWO

by Rodard and Collins (Crestline)



A heavy field of years ago, *Dark Horse* introduced readers to a macho monster hunter Cal McDonald to the unsuspect-

ing reading public in a detective-viewer-scarewell tale called "Warfare" that was reworked in *Dark Horse Presents*. The ride turned out to be more than a metaphor, because the adorably fat and hairy-eyed story ultimately choked.

Gratified, McDonald wanted great on paper. It's a modern-day Sam Spide chasing creatures, not criminals. To put it another way, he's a hard-boiled detective in a world where "evil" has more to do with black men in their dark shadows. And once he landed great on paper, McDonald next turned up pouring the paperback process in, too.

more tall, "a" terrifying, "ee" tales — *Savage Menhaden* and *Gun, Drugs and Monsters* (this time, of course, without the pictures).

But where the shortcomings of "Warfare" could be attributed to both the inevitable ranges of sensibilities and the simple fact that McDonald was a brand new character floundering his feet (rough around the edges and still being laughed at), the shortcomings of the paperback adventures were another matter. Because as credibly as the characters at *Savage Menhaden* and *Gun, Drugs and Monsters* were written, they still felt unreal. Left to the imagination, the horrors facing McDonald failed to properly paint themselves in the minds of the readers. Which brings us to *Criminal Macabre* — the latest Cal McDonald story, the one that marks the character's return to the comic format, and the one that will be remembered as one of the year's milestones. Finally, McDonald looks great on paper.

It's time to mention the fact that Cal McDonald was created by Steve (30 Days of Night) Niles (see page 30 for the full story). It's also time to happily explain what makes

Criminal Macabre a creative double threat of the highest order. First off, Niles has far less wonder with this compelling character, better and brawnier, juicier and flippant, alcohol-soaked and absolutely asshole-est. McDonald is the kind of guy that you love having on your team (and that you hate when he's playing against you). Second, and better yet, Niles' 30 Days and *Nightsworn* co-creator, Ben Templesmith, is at the boards, making the loving nightmare of his Donald's violent world vivid for the everyday and, more importantly, readable.

The first part of a five-issue miniseries, *Criminal Macabre* finds McDonald hot on the trail of a vampire ally to discover, upon tracking the creature to its lair, a larger moon-stalked conspiracy (vampires, werewolves and zombies, oh my!) But it's not the adorably intriguing plot that makes this story so engaging, or even the continually clever and easily realized idea of a hard-boiled dick getting the drop on really evil evil-doers. It's watching McDonald as action that's so righteously rewarding.

Niles starts the story with his hard-boiled



Criminal Macabre: A comic book miniseries from the creators of 30 Days of Night, writer Steve Niles and artist Ben Templesmith.



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been haled up in a police interrogation room, smoking a classic bowl on the chair. "But remember, you asked" screams McDonald tracks the vagaries to his home by smiling at wailer because the wailer has the driver's license, and so one gets anywhere in L.A. without a driver's license.) And last, returning to his office, McDonald pumps a round of bullets into a would-be ambusher who turns out to be a ghost-friend named Mr. Lock. This is the best kind of colour – the kind that no movie can provide.

Where the noir nightmare of *Crossed* Marvels is headed is anyone's guess at this point, but the rule is guaranteed to be rocky on the right kind of way. And it would be remiss in my duties if I complained only the chef's and not the kitchen, because Dark Horse has been doing some fantastic work on the horror front this year. Bearing in mind that the cinema that imprint has come to real horror in the last decade has been *Alien*, *Ruffy* and *Willy*... it's been a pleasure watching them roll out their recent slew of new *plus-sized*, atmospheric, atmospheric *The Devil's Progress* and *The Blackwater Covenant* deserve particular mention, the former being a convoluted but compelling tale of a cursed family, and the latter a story about a famous author who writes a horror story that turns out to be true. "Drawing on your nightmares" is Dark Horse's slogan for the company's new horror push: more than just creepy, it's appropriate. *Harper* is defined.

Carrot collector: when you finish reading the cartoon and rush out to buy *Crossed* Marvels, you will be purchasing a second-run copy (if you find it on the shelf) that is, if it's behind the counter, it'll be a first edition, and priced accordingly. Yes, as of press time, the first printing had deservedly sold out within two weeks of its release. More info: DarkHorse.com.

QUICK CUTS

Let me make something clear before I talk about the CSI comic series: IOW Press wants you to use the cover of issue four as a dash board, *Capiche?* As for the comic itself,



even, it's not the kind of genre book that normal-ly gets covered in this column – but this genre book is the kind of genre book that you think it is. Written by contemporary pulp anatomologist Max (Road to Perdition) Collins, the offbeat CSI TV show comic examines just Gil Grissom and Co against a modern-day Jack the Ripper who is recreating the original serial killer's crimes in the streets

of Vegas (during a Rapper convention, no less). And Collins writes the ripping right down to the dorkish details. An interesting plot with an interesting twist, and a surprisingly informative read. Plus, it deserves recognition for telling the kind of story that the TV version would likely never touch. Kudos and backhands both to publisher Gabriel Rodriguez, whose black and white period piece Rapper treatments look every bit as slick as his modern-day CSI investigator portraits look slick.

Vertigo's current vampire manuscript is "alone" (and) in two ways. First, it's likely wrapping up as you read this (there are five issues left total). Second, at the series' midpoint, there's every indication that big things might be in store for Adam (the new vampire recruit) and his mentor mentor Nucky. Love number three made with the bloody resurrection of Adam's other mentor, Joshua – a first strike by the shadowy operators that

have been lurking at the corners of this book's pages. But who they are and what might be their agenda still remains a complete mystery, and with only two issues to go, it's impossible to predict whether this tale will be a type A or a type B-negative. Given by Brian Bolland continue to stand out (and continue to make me miss *Descent* Man).



If the road to Hell is paved with good intentions, then tonight's *Cause Starkweather* is to let us 'super' intendees *Starkweather* whose name is *DeLamara* without the nobility – acts dead people, and what she sees there, the *Starkweather* finds really crumbling away to reveal a decade stretch of highway with a picturesque name. *Anthologizing* the first six issues of *Crossed*'s story into *horror*, *Route 666 Highway to Horror* is a decent conspiracy story that's a little bit

buff, a little bit *Dark Seven* and a whole lot *Polgara's Progress*. (You're right that last one isn't a scary movie.) And not to overdo it with the comparisons, but there's a *1600 Miles* feel here, too, which is to say that many small story arcs come and go – making it an accessible book for jump-on readers – but a larger mystery swirling at all together weaves through the background. And my compliments to writer/artist team Tony Rodard and Karl Moline for giving us one of the all-time concept high school horror deaths since *Carrie* – in the book's first eight pages!



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flesh and blood
compendium
Harvey Fenton, Ed.
Owl Press

Few things in life live up to their own hype, but the hype on the cover of this mammoth tenth anniversary collection — “The cult magazine that strode boldly into the dark heart of the exploitation film jungle” — is actually a rather modest claim once one samples the buffet of dirt/dirtiness/sidely delights lurking within. Solid as bone I became as such a rabid fan of any publication after reading only the first couple of pages, actually, I think *Raw Magazine* was the last one, so it’s justifiably considered that there are many more of common ground between these two fine periodicals.

Editor Harvey Fenton seems to share my own long-held conviction that there’s absolutely no sense in feeling guilty over guilty pleasures since we have so few pleasures of age description left. Likewise, many of *F&B*’s editorial philosophies appear similar to those of *Raw Magazine*, particularly the belief that anyone who’d inform their readership shouldn’t squish with a really old and unnecessary purge pole in to the desired, thoughtful and interesting analysis, but that the healthy and obvious white decency signposts.



Directors profiled and interviewed are a veritable dream team of cult horror (joining them Collin Lee, Scream MacRae, filmmaker runaway Freddie Francis, Peter Jackson and Marco Bressi) and classic porn makers both cult (Paul Walker, Jess Franco, Tinto Brass) and hard (Gerald Dargatzis, Joe D’Amato, Paul Raymond). *Amplify* ink is also spilled on genre-suspicious names like Nacho Cordero and Regis Latta, blaspheinous superstar Fred Williamson and (of course!) the inimitable Russ Meyer, who’s pretty much a category unto himself (On that note, I mean say I find it odd that Lloyd Kaufman, David Lynch and John Waters barely rate a mention — maybe in another ten years?).

Besides a sampling of film reviews culled from down the years, this coffee table crush-er is brimming with essays and retrospectives on everything, from Bressi’s film careers (whose conservatism is often undermined by their own sexual capriciousness), the audacious David Le Mux Jones porn film franchise, a lengthy examination of British exploitation filmmaking from the forties to the present, and a bustle-lad more to keep even the most decadent truth fiend entertained for hours at a stretch.

Of course, it helps that Fenton has surrounded himself with a magisterial number of talented writers, including *BN* regular Kim Newman, Canadian filmmaker Kevin Ha-



son and my personal fave, the inimitable Stephen Thayer, a passionate genre film scribe who writes like the hurried offspring of Dorothy Parker and Lester Bangs.

Flesh and Blood, where the hell have you been all my life? How could I have — alone — reached such an advanced age while remaining unaware of your existence? (Note to self: pull head out of ass a bit more often.) And by the way, how much is a subscription?

John W. Brown

beyond terror
Stephen Thayer
Owl Press

The fact that I have the symbol for the book of Tobit tattooed on the back of my neck may give you some indication as to how I feel about the films of Lucio Fulci. Fulci’s macabre cinematic career has included westerns, romantic comedies, supernatural thrillers and, of course, a slew of many zombie splatter spots that to this day command the kind of awe-inspired prospects vomiting that most genre books can only dream of achieving. Thanks to folks like author Stephen Thomas, Fulci’s filmography has been rescued from the B-list and recognized as the avant-garde collection it was/is. Thayer’s classic coffee table tome *Beyond Terror* has been updated and somewhat

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Pin is the second in a series, also meant that, inspired with *The Matrix*, but the Wachowski brothers have referenced their own by considering those long animated shorts, if not in the Matrix universe, and could mostly by far more alive. However, she was given the task of depicting just the story of the movie, and this means a different

In my personal favorite, *Apres!* (directed by top Montrealer of *Abix* fame) a young woman, her cat, and some kids find real love in a "haunted" house full of programming glitches, and the agents note is that it does. In *Pygmy* (Tasneem Karangi, *Abix* 2004) a woman is haunted by her lover's return to the States.

is a glimpse of the life of a
in the middle of a re-
noble, burned Samsara
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Japanese Story (Shōwa-
in Japanese, *Shōwa*
Tokyo) a hard-boiled Fi-
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tian means (1962-21st
century version of the
world)

The *White and Red* is short, *The Secret Resurrection* and *Good Night of the China* was written by the Wachowskis. The first is a history of the war between man and the machines (a slight reimagining of *RoboCop*), and then the latter's come to be, and the second is a portrait to the *Matrix* *Revolutions*, given that the story details a scenario where the crew of the *China* must survive for long enough to save Zion of imminent attack. Directed by Andy Jones of *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* fame, *China* is the most realistic (and I've seen the set and probably be a benchmark for the next couple years) although the second *Starship Troopers* will be a lot more.

Good original stories, top-notch animation and music, and a cornucopia of extras on the DVD (plus its feature, *Seven Wonders*), this is a must-own for anime fans. **A-**

Figure 1: Schematic representation of the experimental design. The figure is divided into two main sections: 'Pre-Test' and 'Main Experiment'. The 'Pre-Test' section includes a 'Pre-Test' box with a 'Pre-Test' label and a 'Pre-Test' box with a 'Pre-Test' label. The 'Main Experiment' section includes a 'Main Experiment' box with a 'Main Experiment' label and a 'Main Experiment' box with a 'Main Experiment' label.

1995

Kishinev, a young girl is heartily singing, her voice raised as if to buoy her family's thoughts. After her parents, who are escorted by two brass-instrument bands, she will be brought free to the mountains for several years, where she formed into a fierce warrior equipped by the local Rite God Men. And it's a good thing I just told you all this, because there's no way you would have figured any of it out on your own.

Kath Kohlberg is a new feature by the editors of *Slotted*. The Kath Kohlberg (aka PAM KOB) is, sadly, it seems like a plug background. Like *Slotted*, Kath Kohlberg features CG backgrounds with traditionally selected elements, but they are often not well considered and the effect is more jarring than anything else. The "unique colorization" indexes of the feature consists of the almost complete lack of color (except for the very not least). The images look as washed out as possible to adjust your TV to try and receive the details better, which is a pity since the character designs are highly creative.

1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 26



1000

Group 2B—smaller 14-15mm

But, as of late, busy scheduling policies and self-imposed constraints in book for another series splintered off part of the short-story, leaving out justice to the best parts and leaving readers to feel it. The first volume of this 17th novel series (see [HARPER](#)) was long on suspense and short on something else, but *Blind* picks up here in *Part 2*.

As Ken travels from one dismal post-apocalyptic village to another, he starts making some progress in tracking down his beloved Julia, kidnapped by his ex-best friend. But he also starts getting a lot, as the endless hordes of zombies-turned bikers start doing the unsavory thing and run away when they show up, rather than have Ken kill them with one of his machine-gun weapons. (Edwards: An Awful Secret?)

The three-episode set features Judge, a gang leader who's married not to a woman but to a mobster. ("How political?") After he roasts Kew's wife by shooting an old woman and nearly blinding an innocent child, Sam goes down to cover. (Not much else.)

Even when Jackal releases the ultimate capital killer from the world's best prisons (killing a minor celebrity suffers nowhere the key theme "let this guy off"), it's not enough to stop the Toughest Guy on Earth. Instead, even this has revealed Jack's old character to be his as in 1967. 3

The stop-the-bus episode series (*Planned*) takes us to the Place of Hell, as are the (more graphic) exploring floods and organs. It's silly stuff, but these episodes are an improvement over the first batch.



time trying to figure out who-compete was and what they were up to, only succeeding after reading the character biographies included on the DVD (note to viewer: read those first). Apparently, Cass-Mike, Kiefer's childhood friend, used to and after her father murdered Kiefer's parents, used to use trying to destroy the city of Los Angeles as the help of her powers by ghosts. I think.

When asked just three male characters and consisted mostly of a tightly executed, visually beautiful light sequence, *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* has no characters, slow pacing and loose ends galore. The action sequences are, again, graphically filmed (especially the home decoration), but don't compensate for the film's flat pace. Unapologetically, *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* is a fragment of a much larger work. This DVD is loaded with extras: *Kiss Kiss* novellas, 30-minute Making Of picture galleries, even good English subtitles, but the movie belongs to the Hitchcock!



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Dinner's Ready! THE GORE-MET

Ecads. Hollywood is on a new trend to remake '70s horror!
What's a gorehound to do but heed the words of the GORE-MET?

The *Wicker Man* (1973), *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* (1974), *Sawyer* (1977), *The Hills Have Eyes* (1977), *Death of the Beast* (1978), *The Badger Woods* (1978). These are some of the most influential and enduring horror films ever made and — hanging on your bulletin-board — cause here they come again.

You read that right: it looks like the Hollywood trend to remake *Ecads* horror films like *The Ring* (1998) and *The Eye* (2002) has just gotten a whole new boost. Nope, the '70s are about to be plundered for a slew of upcoming remakes: prequels and sequels. Not only are some of the greatest horror films of the period about to be rethought, repackaged and resold to a fan base that already has pristine DVD re-releases of the original films in their collections, but a prequel to *The Exorcist* (1973) and a sequel to *Black Christmas* (1974) are pending as well. The forthcoming *Time-Coder Fever* (2002) and *Wrong Turn* (2003) claim to have that "70s horror aesthetic" a triptych led by Rob Zombie's *House of 1000 Corpses* a film that dares to revisit the glory days of '70s horror. And if Zombie's film is any indication, *Ecads* days (in *Ecads*).

Well, three years of well-documented delays, over-the-top horror fans came to one tropical conclusion: *House of 1000 Corpses* must be a

dark, disturbing masterpiece (or controversy, if you wish). When Canadian distributor Lions Gate picked the film up for a limited theatrical release, the real reason for the film's troubled history was revealed: *House of 1000 Corpses* is a terrible film.

The movie expected to materialize the horror film for a new generation turned out to be a hollow pastiche of ideas cribbed from genre celebrities as diverse as *Spider-Man*, *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*, *McHale's Navy*, *House by the Cemetery* and *Carrie*. Unfortunately, bereft of plot, energy or emotion, *House of 1000 Corpses* plays out as a first-frenchist sequel, being more than comfortably reminiscent of *Return of the Swamp Thing* *Saw Massacre*, *The Next Generation*. This is all the more confounding in that Zombie's love of the genre is well-known throughout his film and his sincerity is beyond reproach.

Admittedly, Zombie built his film on a hoary old premise: "Kids take wrong turn into backwoods killer country" has been done (innumerable times, and Zombie brings nothing new to the table. Incidentally, both *Wrong Turn* and *Cabin Fever* also strand kids in the woods with yet-to-be results). Zombie styled his killer terribly after the various cannibal stars in *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* films, but where the

Sawyers are horrifyingly insane, *Ecads* and company are merely ridiculous. The victims are vague and unappealing, little more than kill fodder for a cast of dismembered freaks. Not surprisingly, there is no emotional investment on any level in the film. The very thing that made the greatest horror of the '70s so difficult to all through.

If that wasn't enough, the trip through (in *Sawyer's* lair in the closing act of *Zombie's* movie is unbelievably ludicrous and tedious and demands a suspension of disbelief beyond the call of duty in that it's obvious the truth is what her boys are loath to admit. *House of 1000 Corpses* is a confused, delighted, aim-stalled, self-indulgent mess.

Even so, the film has barely limped out of theaters when the inevitable sequel was announced (star witness as another weak horror "franchise" gives to first to legs. If this is the future of adult horror, then the future is bleak indeed. Let a side it, film that live in the face of conventional morality in today's climate. The Motion Picture Association of America will see to that. The better sage of *Zombie's* film should stand as a lesson to all: Love the '70s, not leave it alone.



Rob Zombie's *House of 1000 Corpses* (left) prefigured a Hollywood interest in '70s horror such as *Star Wars*' *Wrong Turn* (right)

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ten tapes ward reading and these were compliments of a copy made by Rob Stabins) if suspect sound quality and crappy album covers are as much a part of The Damned legacy as loopy changes and skin diseases, this one's fairly essential **TO 3.5/10**



THE INDEPENDENTS

Live From Murder Beach

Axe Records

The Drones Aaron Lipkin doesn't stop singing the praises of The Independents, a hard horror band from South Carolina who impressed Jay Rosenberg enough to produce their first album (*Black From the Grave*). The boys have done mighty fine for themselves since the album hit the streets, mainly 'up a huge fanbase and generally bringing desecrator to places like Murder Beach SC. Punk, ska and rock 'n' roll get punched together into a tight set where songs like Wumpscut's From Outer Space and Flesh Eaters share stage time with C is for Cooties and a cover of Suspicious Minds. The and Rosenberg influences creep in here and there, but not enough to strong The Independents off as a copy tape. These guys have given their very own breath on the grandest tree of horror punk. Engineered and produced by Daniel Roy, with covers of Daring's Mother and Rosenberg's Withering Top **GC 3.5/10**



AUDIO DROME



ALKALINE TRIO

Good Mourning

Warner Records/Atlantic

Of interest to the horror set is a band who copy their look from Fearless Dogs, adding gothic mien and the sound of pop punk that comes in the wake of Blink 182. Normally, we don't go for this kind of stuff here at the Drome, but we couldn't deny that Alkaline Trio has a way of injecting punk blackness into their pop singles, turning a typical love-song-thing song into a murder ballad ("Stop our shit my throat/Stop two, play with my blood/Stop three, cover me in dirty sheets.") Universal Music has big hopes for this band, so you'll likely be hearing their stuff all over the radio as you read this. Look for buried satanic references on All On Black and the obvious on Fatally Yours and Every Thing Needs A Lady **GC 3.5/10**



GRAVE MISTAKE

Green Mistake

(www.gravemistake.com)

Some local horror punk kids from Delaware shot up their demo CD with modest packaging, but these ghoulie teens were a truly welcome surprise! This is nothing less than fast, quick and catchy punk rock obsessed with B-movies and boasting a gothic sense of humor. Still in their early stages, Grave Mistake is obviously influenced by the Misfits, as reflected in their

Peak Pop

Peak

song "Mist Mistake" (cheerleader which is essentially a cover of the Misfits' I Turned Into A Monster), as well as a total of three cover proper of other songs by the members of horror punk. The Misfits' tracks sound a tad too sloppy though and for that we'll dock em a skull, but all in all it looks like the scene may have a new act to look out for **AL 3.5/10**



MR. INDEPENDENT

Phantom Drive-In

(www.mr-independent.com)

Like all great horror punk bands before them, Vancouver's Mr. Independent take as much influence from the classic creep of Cies and Osborn and the three chord progression of '60s greaser rock as they do from '80s goth and drive-in spooky flicks, hence the title of this independent release. There is a serious attempt to bring in a Bauhaus/Corn side to the horror punk proceedings, however, which is a departure from the expected Misfit sensibilities. Still, when all is said and done, this vamp-rock trio of brothers plays true to things that click, chuck, monster movies, black, tarot cards and drag racing after dark **AL 3.5/10**



FEAR CULT

Vestibular Complex

Customs

Appeal in a self-aware sort of way. Fear Cult work from is very really

Peak

Peak Pop

about as uncommon to the goth scene as peeing barbers and tarot-cards. A deeper, darker Jonathan Richman-esque singer croons out lines like "my friends will be safer when they are dead" with a lot of a wink and Bessie's Nights is a clever take from the crypt that sponges a little from The Residents and Rick Dale. At times is a bit closer to classic dance-industrial however, there's enough going on here to suggest the "macabre complex" may actually be a subtle pre-take on the overly serious sect. While it's not Ward All 'bando-goth or anything, Fear Cult remind us of the fun kind of dark-pop we all got off on at one time. For most of us it was probably the '80s, for others it may have been last night. Whatever the case, there's something for both on this one. **TO 3.5/10**



WUMPSCUT

Preferential Side

Memories

Just describing an industrial record as "dark" is about as informative as telling you the new Aerosmith is "not as good as the old stuff" but Wumpscut's is a bit. Rudy Betschart, musical output truly explores the depths of desperation and pessimism, nearly coming close to the chaotic and twisted style of the genre's greatest, Skinny Puppy. Preferential Side is the new double CD from this German electronic institution featuring the classic vinyl LP *Mind for a Slaughter* (1984) as well as a disc of rarities, demos, unreleased gems, and remixes by Das Ich and others. What's great about it is that you get the whole spectrum of Wumpscut's output — low-fi, Cassio-inspired dance beats, experimental EDM,

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Books were CD's on both sides of the industry when the writer's most popular release would have been a deal with Sony — would CD's make appearances and about 10 minutes be reduced down to 10? The answer is 17-minute gaps in a concept album revolving around — guess what? — the death

Third *Innovation and a Day*, the new album is a concept rooted in two Indian, Gurbinder "Preet" Gossains in Montreal," the second begins with the story of an organic figure who falls from the grace of god. She is not evil and will not die of pride, the figure attempts to achieve perfection and is again cast out of paradise.

"The tragedy of our record is intended to reflect Jewish apologetics, which takes miserably." This tale, like *Maqam*, ending that the most vital part of the story is told from the point of view of Laila. "We are meant to feel sorry for this character who is despised and despised. He is merely a misbegotten who plays a part in a well-known story, which ends with the present, the end of times. It's really a miserable tale."

The parents in this situation don't

"When we signed to Sony everyone thought we were going to sell out with our music," says the black panther singer. "So we thought we would be recording really anti-establishment and do a rock record, which everyone knows equals over-the-top visible rebelliousness. We were told a 10-second intro to do it."

Accompanying the new album is the band's first single for the north Atlantic (UK) which will have a noticeably broad on P.O. Diddy's previous releases. (UK: 130 Days of Silence)

"With respect to, even though it shows very little," explains Pitt. "They said it is very valuable, but it doesn't do much."

Best, Crude oil PHE will concentrate on producing a bid for the Iraq Marine, which PHE describes as being "pagan oriented and very illiterate."

And as he says, "You can think of *Crucible* of 1950, without immediately calling to mind Alex Chander's 2007 *you are Crucible of Fear*, which shared FNB and featured the same title. Not surprisingly a sequel is already in the works."

"Deaths of Americans made for about 200 grand," says FBI. "It only happened because of everyone coming ahead and wanting it to happen. That's why we did it just for the love of making a better life. That's how we will do it even better with more resources."

[illegible]

In the meantime, look for Creation of 1990 to intensify the current stage of protest on the side of American Jewry and the State:

"We're planning for a real horrific stage show," promises Pitt. "We'll have walls descend, a stage covered in blood - it's going to be really over-the-top and exciting."

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and some of the agro-industrial of SMO is a breath of fresh air. There's even some spunky home-film type soundscapes to keep the folks happy. It's rare to find industrial music that truly has soul, and *Primer* and *Tubo* is a good indication that Tampacraft's is of the jet-black variety. **A- [8.5/10]**

[illegible]

Figure Review: Asunder all hope yet who enter here! A dark and conceptual electro-covers, *UltraChromatic's* second chapter in their *Dark* Alphabet trilogy uses the project's technique with Olanoff's interest as inspiration to draw eerily surreal sound structures. *Spare* unfolds with a myriad of piercing electrical waves, spiraling atmospherics and the occasional wailing soul to text. The thick phosphenes and at times overly dense with semi arrangements, but ultimately achieves the subterranean spirit of the course, providing appropriate kind accompaniment for that brachiosaur voyage into the 7th circle of hell.

— J.A.S. (10)

WATER PUMP

Keywords:

It's no secret that the sexual and
carnery of the Book of the Dead

five appearance lends it pizzazz than a six-man industrial cluster of huge gutters and stomped out seats. B&W's closest cousin is likely the Rhapsody Gacha (only in tongue-in-cheek neon tongue-in-wood, you get the idea). Like with today's dance industrial numbers it is R&M-D. Regenerative covers some pretty amusing territory. Fairy tales and sex monsters, vigilante justice and yanking off in the workplace all get their due even if the music lends it a smaller place of the package. The design's primalistic look includes a few spook-grabbing images of the PostCartoon (a few unmarked strips follow that round out the five shots) proving this Texas T-Rex is about as far removed from the Singing Droid as it comes. **TD-8.5**

[illegible]

Case 40
Turner's Music
From the files of the great FMR
swindle games the United Kingdom
charts 128, a good reason to have a
game publicly with absolute mini-
mum effort! Step 1 name your
band after a Morris song. Step 2
take the first track 'Some Kinda
Love'. Step 3 occasionally turn it to
a Peter Dinklage saxophone. Step 4 to
disc and send to Canada a journal
that magazines. If you must know,
Case 40 is actually a mere 4 min-
utes of disorganized party center
in the style of a lonely psychosis
along with garbled jewelry-box
atmosphere and what sounds like
someone breathing into a mic. One
skill for confirming the old adage
about the book and its cover.
Available from [www.onthe
beach.com.au](http://www.onthe
beach.com.au) 00 00

little the first track, *Some Kinda Love* (Step 3), essentially turn into a *Flower Power* incantation: turn it off, and send to Canada a printer tape magazine. If you must know, *Case 40* is actually a mere 4 minutes of disorganized poetry (centered in the style of a loosely psychotropic) along with garbled jingles, atmospheric and what sounds like someone breathing into a mic. One clue to confirming the old adage about the book and its cover: Available from www.cnet.com/twentytwos.com or 22.com.

[illegible]

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PLAY DEAD



GRAPHICS



PLAYABILITY



SHIVERS

GAMES REVIEWED BY RUSSELL MANN

"WHERE THE HEART IS THERE"

EVIL DEAD: FISTFUL OF DOOMSTICK

PS2

PlayStation 2, Xbox



There is a cult following that treats the *Evil Dead* trilogy as the undisputed champion of camp horror. As long as there isn't too much of the announcement of the first *Evil Dead* video game, even they feel to snuff it out. Enter *Fistful of Doomstick* — a sequel that effectively captures the over-the-top action and gore that earned the film reputation closer to *Top Gun*. As John, players get to spend off crystal balls-inspired one-liners, all while fighting and slaying hordes of zombies in appropriate fashion. But the real method about you is to enjoy a chance with John's character, maybe his leader's memory, and then finish off the dead by blowing it with your shotgun. It's nearly every other respect graphics, music, plot and controls. *Fistful* actually manages to be a solid, engaging game. Nevertheless, the puzzles — which comprise approximately a quarter of the adventure — tend to be a little too obvious. And if you don't have junky stinks, a *Fistful of Doomstick* is a must-have, especially since it costs a mere \$29.99.

CHAOS LEGION

Capcom

PlayStation 2



Players assume the role of a forgettable hero, Selg, who appears as well from last by Capcom, an equally obscure antagonist. However, story and character development aren't the issue where *Chaos Legion* excels, nor does it profess to appeal to fans with the *Devil May Cry* series understands that this of the 16 attract players looking to destroy a relentless onslaught of wicked monsters in campy locales. Year to year, release names often crowd the store shelves at a time in environments that will most easily recall those of a public restroom. To add you in this book and usually overthinking too, Selg can summon over different types of ally members, called Legions (that's the gimmick, only). The action that ensues makes intriguing and compelling, if only slightly repetitive towards the end. Other problems include strangely long load times and inconsistent control scheme. *Chaos Legion* won't frighten you to the point of catatonia, but it's an intense button-masher great for relieving stress.

GOJILLA: DESTROY ALL MONSTERS HERE

Atari

Xbox



Although the smelties behind *War of the Monsters* clearly express that all *Godzilla* *Destroy All Monsters* alike, the latter three better in overall fun. Players select one of a variety of monsters from the *Godzilla* universe — anyone from *Mothra* to *Godzilla 2000*. Equipped with your monster's base, you challenge up to four friends in a free-for-all battle on the computer AI or versus modes or attack points in Destruction mode by destroying as much of a city as possible within a certain amount of time. The game's sole asset is its user-friendliness but, ironically, this asset also eventually becomes its most pronounced weakness. Given that the combat system and game mechanics are fairly generic, those who spend a decent amount of time playing will find that the fighting lacks technique and depth. Nevertheless, *Godzilla* is a solid purchase for those looking for a party game with classic monsters.

COMING IN NOVEMBER

DEAD CRISIS 3

Devoting from the first *Dead Crisis* the series, developer Capcom is taking it one step further in its third, players will be off against an a speedier *Wind* (Xbox)

HAIR-RISE 2

Hair-Rise 2 (PlayStation 2) getting into its third story and intense action. Get up this July for a new trip to ultra toughness. (PS)

BATMAN INKDOWN

A puzzle game to the *Batman* series, *Inkdown* takes the role of four different characters and players will be in a form of combat and puzzle. (PlayStation 2)

SMART MILE 3

The third installment in the series, the smartest series in video games is coming this August. *Smart Mile* keeps the old and new in modern and old-fashioned in the past. (PlayStation 2)

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE II

GOULD HALL

Against a backdrop of the first in the series that *Soldier of Fortune* was one of the most experienced around. The original might be more equally engaging. (Xbox)





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